

# PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

WEDNESDAY DAWN AT LIBINGAN. Daybreak finds three people alone with their departed kin at the Libingan ng mga Bayani in Taguig City, but it will be a totally different scene today when millions descend on cemeteries...

## Probers eye negligence

### 'Santo' enthusiasts bond in cyberspace

By Tonette Orejas  
Inquirer Central Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—ALL Saints' Day or "Todos los Santos" is a daily event for more than 1,000 enthusiasts seeking to preserve Philippine religious artworks and traditions in cyberspace.

Virtual platform for the initiative is the online group Semana Santa Filipinas (SSF).

It all began during an Inter-SANTO/A6

### Woman plays flute to help heal country

By TJ Burgonio

THE SOUND OF DOM-AN Manegdeg's bamboo nose flute can be heard in the unlikely places.

On Dec. 4, 2006, when the Makati City clerk of court was reading out the verdict on four US servicemen accused of raping a Filipino woman, her "sacred breath music" was hushing WOMAN/A4

KENDI LANG ANG KATAPAT NG TAKOT!



### Haunted home teaches kids to face fear

WASHINGTON—IN THE lab, psychology professor David Zald studies how fast adults react to fear. At his home during the US Halloween holiday, he watches kids adjust to it.

Zald, a professor at Van-HAUNTED/A4

### PNP: Glorietta operator may be liable

By Allison W. Lopez and Alcuin Papa

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE has hinged its "gas explosion" theory on the "design" of the Glorietta 2 (G2) mall basement, and said the mall owners and Makati City engineers could be held liable for "negligence" in the Oct. 19 explosion.

"Based on our findings, there is negligence in what we saw in [G2] ... including inspection and design. It will come out in our investigation. Our next step is the determination of who will be culpable for this incident," PNP Director General Avelino Razon yesterday said at the Meet the Press forum in Manila.

According to Razon, the structural design of the Glorietta complex owned and operated by Ayala Land Inc. (ALI) may have violated some safety standards.

"We have requested the Bureau of Fire Protection and city engineers to inspect buildings similarly situated. The Glorietta complex is composed of separate buildings, but they thought of connecting all these buildings and have one integrated facility. Maybe when they joined all these together, may hindi nagawang mabuti sa (something went wrong with) safety standards. That's what we are checking now," he said.

Asked to comment, ALI spokesperson Alfonso Reyes said: "This is a new development PROBERS/A6



...AND DUSK  
Children of soldiers who died for their country light candles and plant a flag as the sun sets on the Libingan ng mga Bayani in Taguig.  
EDWIN BACASMAS

### Ayala stock down after PNP report of gas blast

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

STOCK PRICES OF AYALA LAND Inc. (ALI), owner of Glorietta mall, plunged yesterday as investors got jittery over the possible impact on its earnings of police statements that the mall blast on Oct. 19 that killed 11 people and injured more than a hundred was caused by a gas leak.

ALI fell 6.25 percent and was the day's biggest loser after it closed lower at P15 a share, or down by a peso from P16 on Tuesday.

"Investor sentiment over ALI was guided by PNP (Philippine National Police) findings and prospects of costly (law) suits ahead. ALI will need to explain the impact of these possibilities on its financial statements to assuage investor concerns," said Francisco Liboro, president of PCCI Securities Corp.

Joseph Roxas, president of Eagle Equities Inc., said a delay AYALA STOCK/A6

## All Saints' Day is not a fiesta, Church reminds faithful

By Beverly T. Natividad

AS FILIPINOS FLOCK TO CEMETERIES, the Roman Catholic Church is reminding the faithful that All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day are not meant to be occasions for gambling, karaoke singing and ghost-hunting.

The Catholic Bishops' Confer-

ence of the Philippines yesterday said the people should not stray away from the main point of the celebrations—reverence for the dead who should be treated with respect, said Msgr. Pedro Quitoria, CBCP spokesperson.

"This is not the time to get drunk, this is not the time for

gambling, sing-along and ghost-hunting. Let us maintain the reverence of the occasion," said Quitoria.

According to the CBCP spokesperson, the Church encourages people to pray for their loved ones who have passed away. People may also offer prayers for their dearly

departed during the celebration of the Holy Mass, since the Mass is the highest form of prayer.

The Church also recognizes that regional differences in culture may lead Filipinos to celebrate the occasion in different ways, Quitoria said. Giving way to these differences, he said, the

faithful must just remember to celebrate All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day "in the most fitting way."

The traditional break in the daily grind has made people lump the two feast days as "Undas" (or All Souls' Day), but Quitoria said the two celebra- ALL SAINTS/A4

## Judicial reforms seek to end impunity

By Leila B. Salaverria

(Second of three parts)

CHIEF JUSTICE REYNATO Puno is not only leading the judiciary in taking an activist role, he is also making it more efficient to remove the climate of impunity that has allowed political killings to thrive.

In an interview with the Inquirer, Puno outlines his main objectives: "To strengthen the independence of the courts, enhance the integrity of judges and justices, improve the speed and velocity of the movement of



Fernando del Mundo  
Chief

cases, to widen the aperture to justice of our poor and disadvantaged."

The initiatives are included in the judicial reform program JUDICIAL/A8

### For wealthy litigants, sky's the limit for legal services

By Volt Contreras

WHILE ON A JEEPNEY PLYING Quezon City, Linda lost her mobile phone worth P2,000 in a stickup. But within minutes, the police, with some help from the sidewalk mob, gave chase and eventually cornered the robber.

Street justice swiftly took its course. By the time the woman

came face to face with the suspect at the police station, he was already beaten to a pulp.

Rather than press a formal complaint, Linda chose to simply walk away, resumed her rudely interrupted commute, and charged everything to experience. She got her phone back, anyway, and the thief FOR WEALTHY/A8

### Amparo gives hope to search for justice

By Leila B. Salaverria

AFTER URBAN POOR LEADER Lourdes Rubrico was abducted, detained and forced to agree to become a military asset, she lost her belief in the rule of law.

But when she got from the Supreme Court yesterday a response to her plea for a writ of amparo, Rubrico said there was still hope in the country's AMPARO/A8



## WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Extreme Northern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Mostly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Rezas	Mostly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Mostly Cloudy	Cebu	Mostly Cloudy
Laosang	Mostly Cloudy	Tacloban	Mostly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Ben. Santos	Mostly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Mostly Cloudy
Lagaypi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Mostly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Bevan	Mostly Cloudy

COMPILED BY: SCHOLAR GUERRA, JR. RESEARCH: YVONNE S. SORIANO

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# Second FRONT PAGE

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**EZ2 FOUR DIGIT**  
 19 31 2 6 9 7  
 (In exact order)  
 Mid-Day **SUERTRES** Evening  
 8 7 8 0 2 8  
**MEGALOTTO 6/45**  
 8 10 12 14 24 41  
**P17,819,586.00**

## GMA: It's time to heal wounds from the past

### WHAT'S INSIDE

■ **SENATE BODY**  
sets sight on gas pricing scheme

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■ **9 RP SAILORS**  
aboard hijacked tanker in Somalia

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■ **MOTORIST**  
assistance teams to ensure smooth holiday traffic

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By Michael Lim Ubac

IN HER ALL SAINTS' DAY MESSAGE, President Macapagal-Arroyo asked Filipinos to "light a candle for peace and unity to reign in our country."

Besieged by new calls for her resignation, the President said, "During this day of remembrance and prayer, let us set aside a few minutes to pray as a family."

Ms Arroyo, also loudly criticized for pardoning deposed President and convicted plunderer Joseph Estrada, blamed political bickering for the nation's economic woes.

"Political discord stands in the way of our progress as a nation. It is time for us to heal the wounds from our troubled past and join hands in confronting the myriad challenges of the future," she said.

At 4 p.m. today, the President will visit the tomb of her father, former President Diosdado Macapagal, at the Libingan ng

Mga Bayani in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

In another statement, the President said she was not threatened by new calls for her resignation by some civil society groups.

### 'Impatient few'

Arroyo dismissed her critics as the "impatient few" and said the recently concluded barangay elections showed that the people were not likely to support such an initiative against her.

"The successful outcome of our barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections underscores the people's firm commitment to democracy and strong political institutions," she said.

"That message should not be ignored by groups who are out to destroy the gains of a strong economy through extra-Constitutional means," she added.

Indicating that she did not plan to step down anytime soon, Ms Arroyo stated that the Constitution "clearly sets" the

next election in 2010.

"Let us not be distracted by the impatient few who believe that they are above the law, and thus entitled to undermine the sacrifices and hard work of our people," she said.

The multisectoral coalition Kilusang Makabansang Ekonomiya, led by three Catholic bishops, called on the President to resign and give way to a transition junta that will supervise new elections.

The group stepped up its call amid charges of bribery in connection with the awarding of a government contract for a national broadband network to China's ZTE company. The recent barangay elections were also tainted by revelations that some governors were given bags of money at the end of a Palace meeting.

Ms Arroyo is also battling opposition attempts to file a new and stronger impeachment complaint against her. With a report by Christine Avendaño



A PROTESTER wearing a costume reacts during a Halloween protest Tuesday in Quezon City, calling for the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo amid the alleged bribery and corruption scandals under her administration.

## Pangasinan local execs support Gloria

By Michael Lim Ubac

RUMORS OF INTERNAL SCHISMS in the Palace were fanned yesterday when local executives from Pangasinan trooped to the Palace ostensibly to "show support for the President."

Pangasinan is the home province of Speaker Jose de Venecia and former President Fidel Ramos, both of whom are critical of some recent moves of the President and are being wooed by the opposition.

Led by provincial governor Amado Espino Jr., the Pangasinan delegation handed Arroyo a manifesto expressing the

province's continued support for her presidency.

Mayor Ramon Guico of Binalonan town, president of the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP), told INQUIRER by phone after the meeting that he, Espino, the vice governor, board members, mayors and about 100 other elective officials met the president "to show that we are happy with her administration."

Guico, however, said the hour-long meeting with the President did not touch on her rift with De Venecia. He said the local officials discussed with the President "some local concerns,

like irrigation."

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita has admitted that the rift between the two highest leaders of the ruling party—The President and the Speaker of the House—continued to linger.

"Meron din, pero ano lang yan.. (Yes, there is. But it's not that serious)," he said in an ambush interview following a press conference on Tuesday.

The son of Speaker Jose de Venecia had alleged that the President's husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo, was involved in attempts to railroad the China-funded national broadband contract that was overpriced

and laced with kickbacks.

Palace supporters countered that the Speaker's son, who wanted to do the project himself, had been favored with congressional telecommunication franchises during his father's term.

Ermita, a retired general, said he would be "happy" to serve as "bridge." He also denied that there was an emerging alliance among De Venecia, former President Fidel Ramos and the opposition to oust Ms Arroyo.

Last week, Ramos openly criticized Arroyo, this time for pardoning deposed President Joseph Estrada, who was convicted of plunder.

## 'Goma' not qualified for gov't tax amnesty

ACTOR RICHARD GOMEZ CANNOT avail of the ongoing tax amnesty program to get out of a tax evasion case, according to the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

Under the Tax Amnesty Law passed last May, suspected tax evaders who have been charged under the government's Run After Tax Evaders' (RATE) Program are not qualified for the tax amnesty, said the BIR.

Gomez was charged with tax evasion in April 2005 before the Department of Justice. The DOJ has recently affirmed that the BIR's case against Gomez, also known as "Goma," had merit and that there was sufficient evidence to prove his guilt.

Under the RATE program in-

troduced in 2005, the BIR decided to pursue high-profile tax evasion cases under full media coverage, to discourage dishonest taxpayers.

The BIR charged Gomez for tax evasion after finding that the actor did not pay income taxes from 2000 to 2003 despite his active presence in the entertainment industry.

BIR legal officers cited the P1.8 million payment that ABS-CBN made to Gomez in 2001, P1 million from GMA 7 in 2002, and another P166,000 from ABS-CBN in 2003.

If convicted, Gomez could be sentenced to 2 to 10 years in jail, and imposed a penalty of P100,000. Michelle V. Remo

## Crowded places spook security aides of Erap

CONVICTED PLUNDERER former President Joseph Estrada apparently cannot rest easy despite obtaining a presidential pardon and being released from "rest house" detention.

His security people are very much against the disgraced leader's going to crowded places because "emotions are still high about the executive clemency," said Ferdie Ramos, Estrada's media coordinator.

### No specific threats

Ramos clarified, however, that they have not received specific threats against Estrada who will be making his traditional visit to the tomb of his father, Emilio Ejercito Sr., at the San Juan Cemetery today.

San Juan police chief Supt. Rodelio Jocson said San Juan police will be augmenting the security detail assigned to Estrada as a former President.

He said checkpoints have been set up at the San Juan Cemetery for the visit, adding security checks at the gates would be tight.

The mayor of San Juan, JV Ejercito, is a son of Estrada.

Meanwhile, eight minority senators have agreed to let Estrada be for the moment and let him enjoy his new-

found freedom.

But they warned Estrada, the titular leader of the opposition, against aligning himself with the Arroyo administration.

### 'Kiss of death'

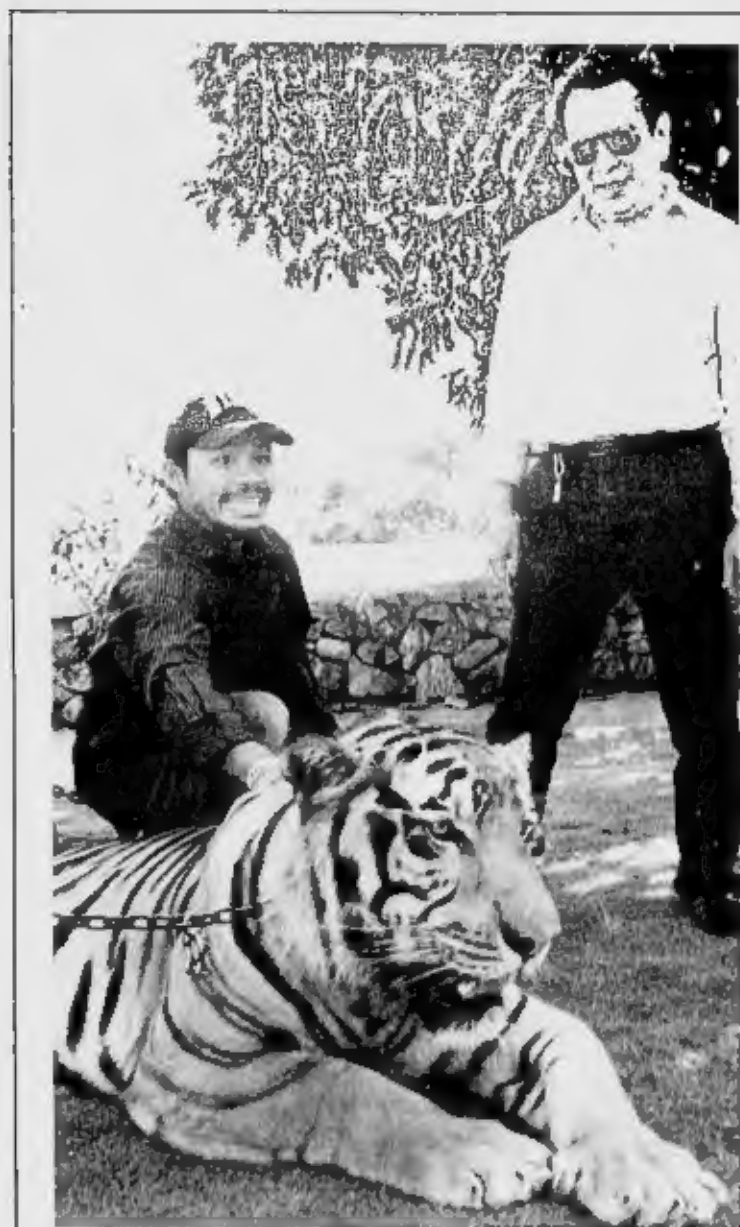
"To do so would be nothing short of a kiss of death," the senators said in a statement yesterday, following a caucus last Tuesday.

Estrada's acceptance of a pardon from President Macapagal-Arroyo, his former vice president who assumed the presidency after his ouster in a military-backed people power revolt in 2001, has thrown the opposition in disarray.

Opposition leaders said they were confused because by accepting the pardon, Estrada was acknowledging Ms Arroyo's legitimacy.

"We believe that former president Joseph Estrada should be given leeway to savor the freedom he has just reacquired. The opposition should not impose anything on him, except for one thing: he shouldn't align himself with the administration," the senators said.

The Senate minority bloc is led by Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., Jeannette I. Ardrade and Dona Passibugan.



### THE BOXER AND THE BEAST

Boxing superstar Manny Pacquiao is obviously feeling nervous as he touches Harry, the Belgian tiger owned by his best friend, former Ilocos Sur Gov Luis Chavit Singson (right). Singson hosted a party for Pacquiao Tuesday in his sprawling residence in Vigan City.

NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU: LEONCIO BALIN JR.

## Grilling of 8-year-old girl by Army men hit

THE MILITANT KILUSANG MAG-bubukid ng Pilipinas peasant group yesterday denounced the Army's alleged abduction and "inhuman interrogation" of an eight-year-old girl in Tuburan, Cebu, whose parents are accused of being members of the communist New People's Army.

The girl was on her way home from her classes at the Mag-atwa Elementary School last Oct. 16 when personnel from the Army's 78th Infantry Battalion picked her up and

brought her to their detachment in Barangay Gaang, according to KMP-Cebu chair Nick Abasolo.

"She was inhumanely subjected to tactical interrogation about the whereabouts of her parents whom they accused of being rebels," Abasolo said.

Abasolo said the procedure was "very traumatic" for the child.

KMP-Cebu said that although the report on the abduction reached its office late, it conducted a fact-finding mission

from Oct. 23 to 27 with the backing of Tuburan Mayor Constanancio Suizo.

"Our 13-man team found that the 78th IB is shamelessly covering up their illegal act by arbitrarily declaring Nena as an abandoned child. But the fact that she was enrolled and being taken care of properly by her custodian while her parents are away working selling ukay-ukay and other RTWs belies their allegation," Abasolo said.

The KMP said the girl is now in the custody of a certain Myrna with the consent of the local social welfare department office.

The girl's aunt, Liza Balde-spinoza, was supposed to reclaim custody of the abducted child yesterday.

In Manila, KMP internal deputy secretary general Willy Marbella denounced the Armed Forces for having "no qualms in abducting children and harming civilians just to get what they want." Jerome Aning



# Senate to look into gas price fix

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND commerce will ask the country's economic managers to explain why a surging peso has not translated to lower prices of gasoline and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG).

Committee chair Sen. Mar Roxas noted that while the peso has already soared to its highest level since July 2000 at P43.85 to the dollar, oil companies have increased their prices 14 times this year, while implementing a roll back for four to six times.

Roxas said the peso's appreciation should have resulted in cheaper gasoline thereby softening its impact on exporters and overseas Filipino workers who now get fewer pesos for their dollars.

Based on his staff's research of fuel prices as of Oct. 20 this year, Roxas said gasoline prices have jumped 14 percent or P5.20 per liter to P42.45 per liter; diesel climbed 11 percent or P3.70 per liter to P36.95 per liter; kerosene up by 9.1 percent or P3.70 per liter to P37.99; and LPG jumped by 7 percent to P33 per 11-kilogram tank to P37.99.

On a year-on-year basis, Roxas said gasoline was up 1.2 percent, diesel 10 percent, kerosene 6 percent, and LPG by 15 percent.

## No collusion

Roxas said that while the oil industry has been deregulated, it was the government's role to make sure that oil companies do not "collude" to raise their pump prices solely on the basis of world crude oil prices without taking into consideration the strong peso.

"Any increase in the price of LPG and kerosene upsets the household budget for food and other essential needs. Meanwhile, increases in gasoline and diesel reduce the take-home pay of our workers, and give the imprimatur—whether justified or not—for traders to hike prices of other consumer goods," he explained.

Roxas has criticized President Macapagal-Arroyo for crowing about the strong peso, a bullish stock market and lower borrowings, while glossing over the growing discontent among a public clamoring for more jobs, lower transport and electricity costs, and more affordable drugs and food.

With experts projecting a further increase in world crude oil prices to over \$100 per barrel due to supply concerns related to renewed tension in the Middle East, Roxas said it was time the Senate looked into the government's action plan to soften the blow of spiraling energy costs.

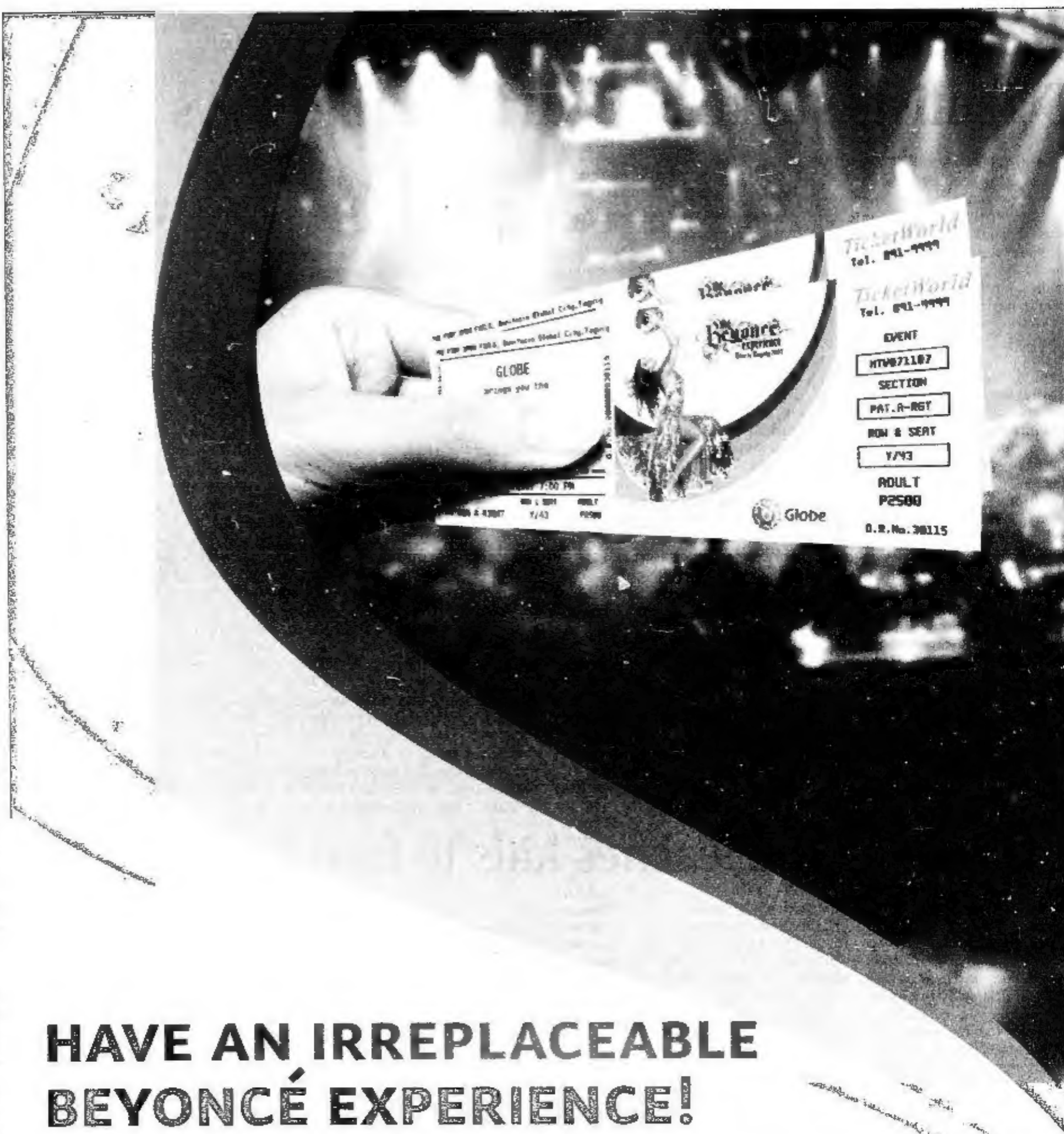
## Shield vs pressures

"Oil, for better or worse, remains an essential part of our lives, and the government needs to do all it can to ensure that the people are shielded from even more severe economic pressures," he said.

"This is not a situation where we can just sit and wait, hoping for stable oil prices. Let's work on a concrete action plan that consumers and the private sector can support and follow in case of more external shocks to our economy."

The Senate inquiry will review the safety nets and options available to the government to deal with soaring oil prices, he said.

"Realities in the petroleum market have a direct effect on practically the entire economy, on all the goods and services produced. The inquiry will focus on government's level of preparedness and its menu of options given the possibility of more oil price increases," he said.



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# NO DARK MOMENTS

## RECHARGEABLE LANTERN

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# Scientists strike back at fear, find ways to cope with anxiety

WASHINGTON—SCIENCE IS GETTING a grip on people's fears.

Scientists say they now know better what is going on inside our brains when a spook jumps out and scares us. Knowing how fear rules the brain should lead to treatments for a major medical problem—when irrational fears go haywire.

"We're making a lot of progress," says University of Michigan psychology professor Stephen Maren. "We're taking all of what we learned from the basic studies of animals and bringing that into the clinical practices that help people. Things are starting to come together in a very important way."

Millions suffer from anxiety disorders, according to the National Institute of Mental Health. A Harvard Medical School study estimated the annual cost to the US economy in 1999 at roughly \$42 billion.

Fear is a basic primal emotion that is key to evolutionary survival. It is one we share with animals. Genetics plays a big role in the development of overwhelming—and needless—fear, psychologists say. But so do traumatic events.

"Fear is a funny thing," says Ted Abel, a fear researcher at the University of Pennsylvania. "One needs enough of it, but not too

much of it."

## Anxiety attack

Armi Rowe, a Connecticut freelance writer and mother, says she used to be "one of those rational types who are usually calm under pressure." She was someone who would ski down the treacherous black diamond trails of snowy mountains.

Then one day, in the midst of coping with a couple of serious illnesses in her family, Rowe felt fear closing in on her while driving alone. The crushing pain on her chest felt like a heart attack. She called an emergency number.

"I was literally frozen with fear," Rowe recalls. It was an anxiety attack. The first of many.

The first sign she would get would be sweaty palms and then a numbness in the pit of the stomach and queasiness. Eventually it escalated until she felt as if she was being attacked by a wild animal.

"There's a trick to panic attack," says David Carbonell, a Chicago psychologist specializing in treating anxiety disorders. "You're experiencing this powerful discomfort but you're getting tricked into treating it like danger."

These days, thanks to counseling, self-study, calming exercises and in-

trospection, Rowe knows how to stop or at least minimize those attacks early on.

## Fear-dampening process

Scientists figure they can improve that fear-dampening process by learning how fear runs through the brain and body.

The fear hot spot is the amygdala, an almond-shaped part of the deep brain.

The amygdala is not responsible for all of people's fear response, but it is like the burglar alarm that connects to everything else, says New York University psychology and neural science professor Elizabeth Phelps.

Emory University psychiatry and psychology professor Michael Davis found that a certain chemical reaction in the amygdala is crucial in the way mice and people learn to overcome fear. When that reaction is deactivated in mice, they never learn to counter their fears.

Scientists found that D-cycloserine, a drug already used to fight hard-to-treat tuberculosis, strengthens that good chemical reaction in mice. Working in combination with therapy, it seems to do the same in people. It was first shown effective with people who have a fear of heights. It also worked in tests with

other types of fear, and it's now being studied in survivors of the World Trade Center attacks and the Iraq war.

The work is promising, but Michigan's Maren cautions that therapy will still be needed: "You're not going to be able to take a pill and make these things go away."

## Fear is king

When it comes to ruling the brain, fear often is king, according to scientists.

"Fear is the most powerful emotion," says University of California Los Angeles psychology professor Michael Fanselow.

People recognize fear in other humans faster than other emotions, according to a new study being published next month.

Research appearing in the journal *Emotion* involved volunteers who were bombarded with pictures of faces showing fear, happiness and no expression. They quickly recognized and reacted to the faces of fear—even when it was turned upside down.

"We think we have some built-in shortcuts of the brain that serve the role that helps us detect anything that could be threatening," says study author Vanderbilt University psychology professor David Zald.



**HALLOWEEN AT ENCHANTED KINGDOM:** A ghost of a girl appears to walk out of a large picture frame during Halloween night at the Enchanted Kingdom in Santa Rosa, Laguna. More than a hundred children came in their scariest best to join the spooky Halloween contest on Saturday. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

# Haunted home teaches kids to face fear

From page A1

derbilt University, turns his house in Nashville, Tennessee, into a Halloween fear lab—with a reward of candy for those who brave it.

On the traditional day that children dress up in costumes and go door to door for treats, skeletons hang from the tree, motion-activated sensors move objects around and a creepy fog

floats around the house.

Zald decorates in classic horror motif for fun, but the psychologist in him cannot help but observe the classic fear response in children.

"They want the candy, but they're not sure they want to come up," says Zald, who in the past has dressed up as a devil but this year will be costumed as the kitschy Disco Stu character from the animated TV series,

"The Simpsons."

By the end of the night, even the young children are not fazed by ghouls and goblins. They control their fear to get the reward of candy, according to Zald, and they learn a healthy lesson.

## Disabling emotion

Fear is a negative emotion and for millions of Americans, it is disabling. Yet people love horror movies, and Halloween is a

holiday that celebrates fear while rewarding children with sweets. There are scientific reasons for this odd mix.

"One of the odder aspects of human nature is our willingness to pay money to actually get scared," Zald says. "Essentially we get off on the excitement. We get a high arousal state and we actually find that appealing."

There are physical chemical rewards in our brain when we experience fear, yet cheat an anticipated

painful threat, according to psychologists. And fear-induced hormones, such as adrenaline, are pleasurable at times.

"Part of the fun of Halloween is that it's a way of experiencing fear in a pretty controlled setting," University of Michigan psychology professor Stephen Maren says. "People enjoy the fun and surprises, but they're putting themselves in situations where they are really

not in danger."

Some people need that kind of excitement, which is similar to the rush felt when playing sports, says New York psychologist Linda Sapadin, author of the book "Master Your Fears."

"We do need some fear in our lives, otherwise things are too placid," Sapadin says.

On the other hand, she notes, people who live in war zones, do not go to horror movies. AP

# All Saints' Day is not a fiesta, Church reminds faithful

From page A1

tions are connected since "we all pray for the dearly departed on both days."

"We pray to ask for the intercession or help of all Saints, known and unknown, on Nov. 1 and we pray for the

souls of the departed faithful who have yet to be purified and reach heaven on Nov. 2," he said.

The archbishop of Manila, Cardinal Gaudencio Rosales, also called on the faithful to continue with traditional activities at cemeteries today

and tomorrow, both public holidays.

## Security beefed up

Emergency services stepped up security on the eve of All Saints' Day as millions of commuters packed airports, sea ports and bus terminals in an

annual exodus to visit cemeteries and families in their home provinces.

More than 9,000 police guarded cemeteries and vital facilities in Metro Manila. Plainclothes marshals sat on buses and ships, while explosives-sniffing dogs were deployed to

beef up transport security, officials said.

Police also appealed to parents to place name tags on their children in case they are separated in crowds inside cemeteries.

There were no reports of any specific threats, but government troops said military oper-

ations against Moro militants in Mindanao as well as communist insurgents would continue.

Tensions in Manila were heightened after an explosion rocked the Glorietta 2 shopping mall on Oct. 19, killing 11 people and injuring more than 100.

*With a report from Reuters*

# Woman plays flute to help heal country

From page A1

the crowd outside the packed courtroom.

That music has since been heard at a fast by activist priest Fr. Robert Reyes at the People Power Monument, a Mass for a hazing victim, and a "cleansing ritual" at the Commission on Elections, among other events.

But outside her network of friends, nobody really knows the 35-year-old flutist, and what she is advocating.

Widowed in 2005 when her

activist-husband Jose Manegdeg was killed allegedly by a military officer, Dom-an says she is sharing her music with others for her healing—and the country's.

Despite the deaths of loved ones—including her two brothers killed in "senseless violence"—she has chosen to spread the virtues of peace and healing.

## Social healing

"The idea behind flute-playing is to create space for silence.

Only in the space of silence can we evoke the purity of visions that we are articulating, and renew the strength that has dissipated amid violence," she says in an interview.

But Dom-an reckons that her own healing will never be complete until a society wracked by violence is itself healed.

"I enjoy playing the bamboo flute; it heals me. But my total healing lies in social healing. Because the death of my husband was definitely something social," she says.

Jose Manegdeg, a lay leader of the Rural Missionaries of the Philippines, was waylaid and shot 22 times allegedly by an Army officer in a tobacco field in San Esteban, Ilocos Sur, after delivering a lecture on human rights on the night of Nov. 28, 2005. He was 37.

Having worked closely with peasants, health workers, indigenous peoples, and church people in Cordillera and Luzon, he was suspected to have been a member of the communist New



**DOM-AN Manegdeg with her flute is not out to save the world, she says. She just wants to help heal it and herself and her two daughters after a soldier gunned down her activist husband in 2005.** JOAN BONDOC

People's Army. But he was not, his widow says.

Dom-an, who was born in Sagada, Mountain Province, and given the Christian name Florence, met Jose from Pagudpud, Ilocos Norte, at a clergy laity formation program in Baguio in 1993.

They were married in 1996. A medical technology graduate of the St. Louis University, Dom-an also worked as a caregiver in Hong Kong.

Nine months after her husband was killed, she and their two daughters began their "healing journey," moving from Baguio City to Manila to elude harassment from unidentified men.

## "Spontaneous music"

Dom-an learned to play the flute from an elder brother in 1992. She has two bamboo flutes—one from a mining village in Itogon, Benguet, and the other from a village along the Chico River in Mountain Province.

Explaining why she went back to flute playing, Dom-an says she realized "it has a good effect."

"And then, people were saying I play the flute well," she

says. "Well, not really. I don't play it the traditional way."

Dom-an plays her own compositions on life, love, peace and healing. Cordillera love songs, and "spontaneous music," which she calls "sacred breath music."

"Her music reminded some of old Irish airs," Denis Murphy of the Urban Poor Associates says in a March 3 commentary in the *Inquirer*.

"The songs are sad, yet beautiful. They seem to say music will outlast the evil, no matter how bad it is," says Murphy, who fasted along with Reyes at the People Power Monument.

## Evolving meaning

In Baguio, Dom-an was asked to play her flute at a rally against incursions into public property.

"As I played more and more, the meaning of the playing evolved. And I actively played it publicly for advocacy—to evoke unity and healing," she says.

When she and her daughters Andrea Nikole (now 11) and Geraldine Kate (now 8) moved to Manila in August 2006, she brought her wind instruments

with her.

Dom-an joined the Philippine Educational Theater Association, sought sanctuary at a healing and renewal center in Tagaytay City, met Reyes, and networked with Kubol Pagasa Community, a group of like-minded citizens advocating reforms.

Then came invitations for her to perform at Kubol's events, starting with Reyes' fast at the People Power Monument in February, a Mass for a public administration student who died of hazing injuries at the University of the Philippines campus in September, and a "cleansing ritual" at the Comelec on Oct. 22.

She also performed at less controversial events, such as Women's Day in Quezon City, Cordillera Day in Baguio, and a Claret Seminary concert in Quezon City.

In between, she played before audiences of healers and artists.

## Postcards

As part of her healing journey, Dom-an gives away postcards carrying photographs of the family dogs, the tobacco field at sunset (where her husband was killed), butterflies and flowers, and conveying messages of peace.

At the back of each postcard is a brief description of Jose Manegdeg's advocacy.

"I was trying to make sense [of his death]. It's the only way we can bear the senselessness, the only way we can reclaim our life, our dignity," Dom-an says.

She herself mailed some of the postcards to government leaders and military and police officials. But she is not sure if they reached their destination.

She says she feels no hatred toward her husband's killer, whom she described as a mere "tool."

Months after the killing, Dom-an bought a camera to document her daughters' healing. She also brought three puppies to their home in Baguio.

She experimented with the camera and took pictures of the puppies playing in a park. With her friends raving over the outcome, she decided to make postcards both as an advocacy and as a source of income.

"My daughters talk with every lizard, butterfly, cat or dog that strays into our home. Their father was still alive when their pets died, and we buried them," Dom-an recalls.

"They got the awareness that all who die go to a spirit world where everyone will meet. That helped them [to accept] their father's death. They say it's the animal kingdom that will take care of those who die."

## Close to nature

Dom-an, her daughters and a niece now live close to nature in a community near the Taal Volcano. (There, they will light a candle as the country remembers its dead today and tomorrow.)

She plans to appeal her husband's case—which was dismissed by the Ilocos Sur prosecutor's office this year after the witness retracted his statement—and hopes her advocacy will inspire a movement of peace and healing.

One of her dreams is to set up a healing center at their home in Sagada, which war widows and orphans can visit.

Meanwhile, she continues to play the flute.

"I don't presume that my music will save the world. As far as I've felt, I connected with many others," Dom-an says. "It's connecting me with others because my healing journey is linked with the social healing journey of the country, of the world."

## Corrections

IN THE OCT. 25 ISSUE, an article on Page A2—"More churches rap GMA"—misstated the name of a network of Protestant churches in the Philippines. The network's name is Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches Inc.—not Philippine Council of Churches.

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IN THE OCT. 31 ISSUE, an article on Page A7—"GMA reaching out to Chavit," says Palace—erroneously described Luis "Chavit" Singson as the Ilocos Sur governor. The position is currently held by Deogracias Victor Savellano. Singson is a former governor of the province.

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BINAY

# Binay dares PNP to make public full report

By Dj Yap

MAKATI MAYOR JEJOMAR BINAY yesterday challenged the Philippine National Police to make public the full report of its findings along with those of foreign authorities, on the Glorietta 2 explosion.

"If they already have the findings of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation and of the Australian Federal Police, then by all means release them now,"

Binay said, speaking through his political adviser Lito Anzures.

Binay also said the PNP should show the public that it had conducted a "reliable and thorough investigation."

Earlier, the mayor had called for an independent and impartial probe, citing the PNP's "inconsistent and at times illogical statements."

He had said two fact-finding bodies should be formed—one

to probe the origin of the blast and the other to examine the government response.

Binay is scheduled to meet with Makati businessmen for the Makati Business Development Council on Wednesday.

One of the items on the agenda is the formation of the fact-finding bodies, he said yesterday.

But whether the explosion was caused by a gas leak or a bomb, Binay stressed that City

Hall would not side with anyone.

Anzures said it was not true, as some quarters believe, that Binay, who is also president of the United Opposition, would prefer a bombing scenario to the gas-explosion theory.

"A terrorist angle is not good for City Hall, as it would scare away foreign investors and businessmen. But at the same time, we're not wishing for this

to be an accident," Anzures said.

Binay said that if it was a bomb attack, interagency intelligence-sharing should be boosted and steps taken to secure the metropolis.

He said that if the blast was accidental, the police should investigate whether it was a case of negligence.

"If there was negligence, then whose? And which part?" he said.

## Probers eye negligence in mall explosion

From page A1

in the investigation, and we are uncertain how they have reached the conclusion that there are issues concerning design and inspection.

"We have no reason to believe that we are negligent in these matters, and we hope that they will clarify these statements when they issue the final report."

### Rectangular tank

Razon reiterated that investigators were surprised to find a diesel tank in the G2 basement that was rectangular in form and not according to specifications of a "stronger cylindrical design."

Add to that, he said, the ill-situated electrical switch, motor and batteries: "There's an electrical switch near the diesel tank. There's a motor, there are batteries ... So all these will cause a spark. With the diesel tank in the same place where ventilation is not good because of the way the place was designed, plus the leak from the septic vault that would release methane, *sasabog talaga* (it will really explode). It's an accident waiting to happen."

According to the PNP theory, a combination of methane gas and diesel fumes caused the explosion that killed 12 people and injured more than 100 others.

Earlier yesterday, Reyes said ALI had not changed its earlier statement that "maintenance procedures were in place and were followed well" prior to the explosion.

He said the company would await the investigators' report, which, Razon said, would be issued in a few days.

Reyes added: "There is nothing to refute because given [the PNP officials'] statements, they are focusing on the gas theory. But at the same time, they have to firmly establish [the kind of

gas, where the source could have been, how much gas would be required to produce an explosion of that magnitude, and the source of the ignition."

### 'Better term'

At a press conference in Camp Crame, Director Geary Barias, chief of the National Capital Region Police Office, said negligence, and not an accidental gas explosion, was now the main angle in the investigation.

"Even the word 'accident' is not [the right word]. 'Negligence' maybe would be a better term because when you say 'accident,' that's an act of God," Barias said in response to whether the PNP could say with finality that an accident had caused the explosion.

He said investigators were preparing to recover a portable submersible pump from the G2 basement that could provide the final piece of the puzzle and answer the question of how the gases were ignited.

As to who is to be held liable for the blast, Barias said this was still under study: "That is the job of the lawyers—to determine who has responsibility over that facility."

Barias said investigators were searching for the engineer employed by the Makati Supermarket.

He said ALI had told police that the supermarket had control of the G2 basement, and that there was a contract covering this arrangement.

Razon also said the submersible pump in the G2 basement was "material" to the PNP analysis of the explosion.

He added that should ALI insist that the explosion was not an industrial accident, the company should be ready to back its claim:

"Whatever report we will submit, it will become the basis for any legal action that may ensue. If Ayala has allegations, they should prepare to support



POLICE Director Geary Barias shows a copy of the Australian Federal Police investigation findings on the Glorietta 2 explosion during a press conference at Camp Crame on Wednesday.

[these] in whatever forum we will bring it to."

### Aussie report

Barias showed reporters a copy of the report of the Australian police on their own inquiry, which, he said, backed the PNP theory. (Sources told the *Inquirer* that two Australian investigators worked at the blast site.)

Quoting from the 13-page report, Barias said the Australians had found that the blast was a "fuel-air mixture explosion" that originated from the G2 basement.

He said the Australians also did not find any "initiator" of the blast or any parts of a bomb.

"There is no evidence to suggest that the explosion had been caused and/or initiated by an IED, or Improvised Explosive Device," Barias said, reading from the report.

He said this was the reason investigators wanted to examine the submersible pump: "That could also be one of the sources [of the explosion]. It's taking us time to finish our report because we have to establish the source."

Barias said investigators would look for burns on the pump and conduct a chemical analysis of the substances found in it.

"Maybe that would give us conclusions that the spark came from the machine. Or it could have come from somewhere else because we have determined four other likely sources of the ignition," he said.

He added that the Australians had not determined the exact gas that acted as fuel for the blast. But he said the report listed possible gases, including "sewer gas" and "sludge fumes" that could consist of sulfur dioxide, methane, ammonia and diesel fumes.

### Terror question

Barias clarified that the Australians worked "hands on" and alongside the PNP but were concerned only with determining if the explosion was a terror attack.

He said that on the PNP's part, it needed to come up with a complete picture of what had happened because its investigation would be part of cases to be filed against those responsible.

He added that the possible charge was negligence resulting in multiple homicide and multiple physical injuries.

"[The Australians'] concerns are different from ours. We are doing more extensive work. There are areas which they left hanging because that is not their concern, like the source of ignition and others. What matters here is not the findings of the [Australian Federal Police]. What matters is the findings of the PNP and these are the same things that will be used in the court," Barias said.

The report was signed by Kurt Plummer, the Australian Embassy's liaison officer in Manila. It was dated Oct. 27 and sent to Razon on Oct. 30.

Barias said that per the Australians' instructions, he could not distribute copies of the report to the media.

### FBI report

The other day, Razon said Australian probers as well as American investigators from the US Federal Bureau of Investigation had confirmed the PNP finding that it was a gas explosion.

sion and not a bomb attack that occurred on Oct. 19.

Barias said he was expecting to receive a copy of the FBI report soon. But he said he did not know if "that's really a finding, or their observation of the method of the investigation being conducted."

He said the reports of the Australians and the Americans could be incorporated in the final PNP report.

According to Barias, the American and Australian investigators have left the country.

An Israeli expert also made a cursory inspection of the site and concluded that the blast was a gas explosion, Barias said.

"From a visual standpoint only, he could already say that it was gas that caused the explosion ... These Israelis have explosives for breakfast, so by just looking at the telltale signs, they know if it's caused by a bomb or gas."

Barias said the Israeli expert was hired by a local company and was invited to the blast site to make his own assessment.

### Patience

Barias appealed to the public and to the families of the casualties for patience.

"Let's just be a little patient. We are being very thorough here because the case can be thrown out if we are not very thorough. Hopefully, justice will be served," he said.

ALI's Reyes expressed hope that the PNP and the foreign investigators would make public their respective reports, "so that facts can be established which will support their ... gas explosion theory."

When asked about possible lawsuits, he said: "I think it's too early to be talking about liabilities because [the investigation is] not yet wrapped up and there are no charges to answer to." With reports from Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

## Ayala stock down after PNP report of gas blast

From page A1

in the opening of Glorietta 2 would affect the revenue of the mall.

"It's not the expenses on repairs we are worried about because those are capitalized. The problem is the loss in revenues," Roxas said. Glorietta 2 accounts for a quarter of total revenue of the mall.

ALI, the country's largest real

estate developer, accounts for 18 percent of the Ayala Corp. conglomerate.

In the first half of 2007, ALI posted a net income of P2.1 billion. Ayala Corp. announced a consolidated net income of P11.5 billion in the first half.

ALI's residential development business accounted for more than half of its revenue

of P14 billion in 2006. This was followed by shopping centers at P4 billion or 15 percent. Corporate business contributed P1.3 billion or 5 percent.

### Needs of victims

Numbers and decimal points are the least of its concerns right now, according to ALI. Its primary concern is to cater to

the needs of the blast victims.

Asked about the amount that the company had set aside for victim assistance, ALI spokesperson Alfonso Reyes said: "We are not thinking about that right now. We are thinking of their needs."

"For the wounded, we have provided for hospitalization and medicines they need. For those who have been dis-

charged, if they would require additional medical attention, we are providing that," Reyes said.

### Counseling

For families of those who lost their lives in the blast, ALI is willing to provide them with counseling with the help of partners it plans to tap.

"We are looking at different

possibilities depending on the circumstance of each family," Reyes said.

He said ALI was in constant touch with the bereaved families. "(W)e are providing as much assistance for the different needs of the victims and their families. We will not turn our backs on them," the ALI spokesperson said. With a report from *Inquirer Research*

## 'Santo' enthusiasts bond in cyberspace

From page A1

net chat between Victor Ancheta, 18, a Filipino art student in Houston, Texas, and Robby de la Vega, 20, a student in Meycauayan, Bulacan, according to advertising executive and saint collector Alex Castro.

Ancheta and De la Vega then decided to put up SSF on Flickr, a free online photo-sharing service, in 2006.

"The initial intent was to create a visual reference of our religious traditions from all parts of the country, with content contribution from members. Simple discussion threads are also appended to the photos, so that more information and opinions can be shared among members," Castro said.

SSF drew a large following and its pool accumulated more than 8,000 photographs of saints and 700 discussion topics. SSF spawned a sister site: "Santos: Images of Faith" and more Filipino Flickr groups with religious themes.

"SSF today is the most informative, progressive and largest group on the Web, using the members' collective passion and

knowledge to perpetuate, propagate, and increase the devotion to Philippine [religious] traditions," Castro said.

"Sponsor-a-Santo" program followed. Here, resources are pooled to give a devotional image to an indigent member or donate a piece to a poor parish.

Through this program, De la Vega managed to replace the family's image of the Virgin Mary that he had lost to his mother's relatives.

The image he got was donated by an SSF member in Pampanga and restored with a cash donation from a paralegal in Nashville, Tennessee. Its gold crown came from a Makati City lawyer, a scepter from a member in San Mateo, Rizal, and its carved base from a foreign service worker in Kuwait.

### Interviews with santeros

Ancheta created a Sto. Niño to accompany the statue named as the "Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary."

The image was displayed on the Web in May.

Online, a favorite is a personal inter-

view series with what Castro called "movers and shakers of the santero (makers of the images of saints) as well as names associated with culture and heritage."

They include cultural activist Basilidez Bautista of Bulacan; ecclesiastical artists Nick Lugue and Jeric Canlas of Pampanga; Francisco Vecin of Makati; wigmaker Bella Francisco; and vestment maker Ramon Gutierrez.

The group has also done heritage tours for members who live in the Philippines.

Don Ado Escudero, for one, hosted a tour of his family's Villa Escudero in Quezon and a discussion there on the state of devotional practices.

### For love of saints

A group called Semana Santa Real-World (SS RealWorld), led by its president Rainier Saxon, also documents in photographs the local Lenten traditions, specifically religious images, processions, vanishing arts and crafts.

For the love of saints and as an expression of religious faith, SS Real-

World is undertaking the "Pilgrim Santo," outreach programs for poor parishes, heritage church tours in Pampanga and Pangasinan, santo exhibits and a convention, a book and video documentation projects.

Theirs is not a first-time journey.

Fernando Zobel, for instance, has written the book "Philippine Religious Imagery."

Zobel classified Philippine santos based on popular, classical and ornate styles.

Sinibaldo de Mas, a Spanish diplomat who introduced photography to the Philippines in 1841, wrote accounts on the overly decorated images of saints and the Virgin Mary in Manila.

Much of the early santeros had gone unknown, according to Castro.

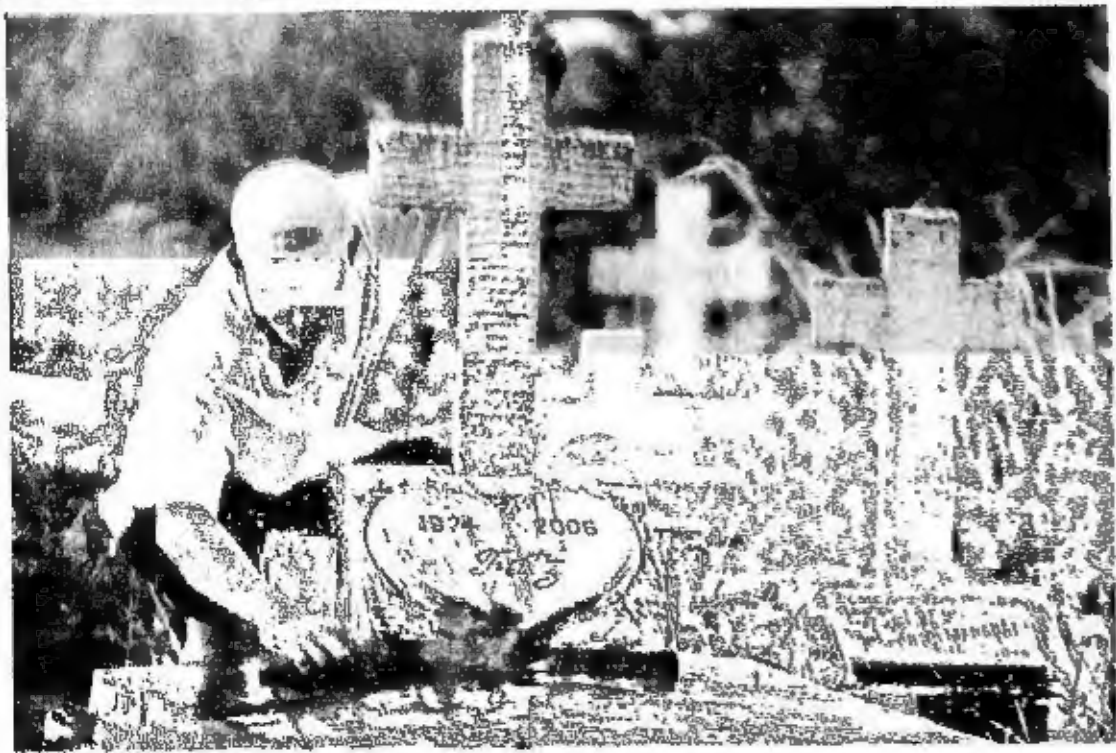
The few known ones were Juan de los Santos, a carver and silversmith in Laguna in the 18th century; Isabelo Tampingco of Binondo who was said to have started the use of native floral motifs in his carvings; and the Flores family of Betis, Pampanga.



AN IMAGE of the Virgin Mary owned by a member of the Semana Santa Filipinas.

TONETTE OREAS





IT'S this time of the year when tombs are spruced up, like this one at the Manila North Cemetery.

## 'Bonus day' for tomb cleaners

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.  
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LUCENA CITY—RAIN OR shine for the past two weeks, Jennifer Ilagan has been busy sprucing up tombs of different makes at the Saint Ferdinand Memorial Park in Barangay Ibabang Dupay on the outskirts of Lucena City.

"I have to make every tomb under my care very clean so that the owners would spare me a few hundred pesos, sort of an annual bonus," Ilagan said last week while engrossed in cleaning the tiles of one of the 17 tombs under her care inside the ritzy graveyard.

Ilagan is one of several tomb caretakers—mostly family members of memorial park workers—who earn extra pesos by maintaining cleanliness of a contracted grave. Relatives of the departed pay a minimum of P200 a month for the job, she said.

"The rate depends upon the tomb to be regularly maintained and cleaned up. Bigger area, bigger pay. For the 17 tombs under my care, I'm netting around P3,500 every month," Ilagan boasted.

"That's an added income to help my husband support the family," said the mother of four, who has been cleaning tombs for the past seven years.

The Ilagans live in a shack near the cemetery chapel.

### Workers' sideline

The owner of the private cemetery allows tomb cleaning as the workers' "sideline" to help cover daily family expenses.

While Ilagan was cleaning, her 8-year-old son Jonjie was fetching water from a nearby ice plant. He carried a plastic container on a small *triskad* (tricycle).

Amid the intermittent rains, mother and son just kept on

brushing the concrete grave with a detergent until it was shiny.

Some relatives of the departed in the tombs under her care visit once a month, which, she says, also serves as her payday. Others want her to pick up her monthly payment from their house in the city.

"If they are satisfied with my good service, most of them give me bonus on All Saints' Day as a token of appreciation," she said.

Unlike Jennifer, several boys were waiting for clients to hire them clean tombs.

"Compared with the past years when we were already busy during these days, there are still no clients around because of the continuous rains for the past several days," said Lito Banaag, 12.

Asked where they would spend the money they could earn, he said with a mischievous grin: "In computer games."

# DPWH acts to ease All Saints' Day traffic

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC Works and Highways has deployed motorist assistance units all over Metro Manila to ensure the smooth flow of traffic during the country's commemoration of All Saints' Day today.

Angelito Twano, DPWH National Capital Region assistant director, said the units were formed to respond to the needs of motorists, especially those going home to the provinces.

"We are expecting a heavy volume of vehicles traversing through Metro Manila's roads and bridges today," Twano said in a phone interview.

DPWH Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. had earlier announced that all national roads have been cleared in time for the long weekend.

Ebdane said he has instructed all regional directors and district engineers to conduct road maintenance works on national roads in preparation for the expected influx of motorists going home to their respective provinces.

### Passenger surge

Meanwhile, the long weekend eased the expected surge of passengers bound for their home provinces and vacation spots.

Airport officials saw a quieter exodus for the observance of Nov. 1 holiday even while they noted a higher rise of outbound passengers in domestic flights this year than in 2006.

"The terminals, especially the domestic [airport], were not crowded because the peak of passengers was spread out. It started on Oct. 26, when many went home for the long week-

end, and we saw that by yesterday, the surge was already waning," said airport operations chief Octavio Lina while observing passenger arrivals at the old international terminal.

The Manila International Airport Authority's (Miaa) operations division estimated an 11 percent jump in domestic departures by Oct. 26, increasing

from just over 6,000 passengers a day prior to the holiday rush to between 7,000 and 7,500.

The rise rate is higher than the increase seen in the same period last year, when Miaa pegged the holiday jump in departures at seven percent, Lina said. *With a report by Terra V. Quismundo*

## Notice is hereby given that **FERNANDO T. FRANCISCO**

has a pending Warrant of Arrest for

### Tax Evasion

issued by the Court of Tax Appeals (CTA) in CTA Criminal Case Nos. O-049, O-050 and O-051 under Section 255 of Republic Act No. 8424 or Tax Reform Act of 1997 as amended in relation to Section 253(d) of the same Code.

If you have any information that would lead to the arrest of the said person, please immediately contact the following:

**Bureau of Internal Revenue  
Run After Tax Evaders (RATE)  
Program  
(632) 981-7128**

or

**Court of Tax Appeals  
(632) 928-3202 / 928-7649**

All information shall be kept confidential.

**We at Ayala Land express our heartfelt sympathy to the families and friends affected by the Glorietta 2 incident.**

**We are offering daily masses until November 27 to give comfort and peace during these difficult times.**

**Masses will be held at the following churches:**

**Greenbelt Chapel**

**7:15AM - Monday - Friday; Sunday**

**12:15PM - Saturday**

**Santuario de San Antonio (Forbes)**

**7:30AM**

**Don Bosco Parish (San Lorenzo)**

**6:30AM**



# Judicial reforms seek to end impunity

From page A1

that has been in the works for the past seven years.

A lot of progress has been achieved, says Puno, 67, who became the Chief Justice in December 2006.

"It is a continuing program. This will go beyond my term and perhaps the term of the incoming chief justice whoever he is," he says.

"There's no end to improvement. We've got to look for new partners, foreign and local, for funding, for delivery of expertise. We'd like to be given the best practices in the world."

The efficient administration of justice is hobbled by a shortage of judges in a nation where lawyers seem to be a dime a dozen. The judiciary isn't as attractive as Puno would have it. Pay is low, the risk is high.

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago once said that as a Quezon City trial judge, she used to eat death threats for breakfast. She may be forgiven the hyperbole.

Ten judges have been killed gangland-style since Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo became President in 2001. Judges are the next favorite targets of extrajudicial executions after leftist activists, clerics and journalists.

None of the murders of the judges has been solved.

## Injustice against judges

"When injustice is committed against judges, it is very important that justice be given to them," retired Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban says. "Otherwise, how can the judges be expected to give justice to the people if justice to them is not

attended to?"

Puno, in exasperation, talks of arming judges. He recalls telling an assembly of judicial personnel in Iloilo City on Sept. 10 that the Supreme Court is considering allowing those facing threats to carry firearms.

"There will be justifications. There will be a study of their character and temperament," he says of the judges who number around 2,300 across the land.

Another challenge of the judicial reform program is decongesting court dockets and speeding up the resolution of cases. Many accused are spending time in cramped jails awaiting final adjudication.

## High rate of vacancy

"The public perception is there really is substantial delay," says Evelyn Dum Dum, the Supreme Court's judicial reform program administrator, stressing that justice delayed is justice denied.

She says one major factor is the high rate of vacancy among personnel, including judges, prosecutors and public attorneys. This has reached more than 35 percent.

"You have a limited number of judges and you have an increasing number of cases that are filed," Dum Dum says. "You cannot attract the best and the brightest."

Entry-level salary for judges used to be P25,000 a month. This has been raised threefold, with the nod from Congress, resulting in increase in applicants.

"We're also addressing the issue of security. We're preparing security manuals, protocols in case you have death threat," Dum Dum says. A team of court marshals is being assembled to prosecute cases involving threats



EDITH Burgos, mother of missing activist Jonas, and relatives of other missing militants file a petition for a writ of amparo in the Supreme Court in Manila. The group says the high court is their only remaining chance to find justice for their loved ones.

of violence against judges.

Case congestion and delay are not just a failure of the judiciary. The criminal justice system includes law enforcement, court system, rehabilitation and the community.

## Coordination

The Department of Justice, Department of the Interior and Local Governments, cities and municipalities ideally coordinate with one another in the prosecution of cases. A suit can be bungled depending on the handling of evidence by either police or prosecutor.

Because of vacancies, prosecutors or public attorneys have to rush from one courtroom to another across town, resulting in delays and postponements of hearings.

The sheer number of cases boggles the mind.

Dum Dum says 60 percent of cases filed in court involve bouncing checks. "They're using the courts as collection agents.

Even small amounts, like P5,000, reach the court," she says.

## Alternative dispute resolution

The high tribunal has drawn up an "alternative dispute resolution mechanism."

"We're trying mediation, conciliation, and then, under our development partners, we're going to pilot our small claims court," Dum Dum says.

The Philippine Justice Academy run by the Supreme Court is training mediators to try and settle disputes so cases do not have to go to formal trial. Mediation centers are being established in the provinces.

A "justice on wheels" program is in place, hearing cases in detention centers or municipal halls. Three high-tech buses, acquired with funding from the World Bank, have been deployed under this project.

## Barangay justice system

The high tribunal also is supporting the barangay justice system (BJS), run by the DOJ and DILG.

The Supreme Court does not provide funding to the BJS, but its development partners, like the Gerry Roxas Foundation named after the late former senator, are active in supporting the project.

The BJS, staffed mostly by respected residents like teachers and retired government officials, has a high batting rate of settling cases, says Dum Dum.

## Computerized tracking

In Pasay and Lapu Lapu cities, the Supreme Court is starting a computerized system of case tracking. A litigant does not have to go to court to find out the status of his or her case.

"All you have to do, if you know the case number or know the title of the case, is encode it in the computer. If not, we're going to put up a public information kiosk, or maybe in the barangay, where they can ask about their case," says Dum Dum.

A red flag goes up to indicate a case has been pending for more than the required number of 40 or 45 days, she says.

The World Bank is also funding an "institutional integrity development" project that was set up to address allegations of corruption in the judiciary.

A nationwide orientation workshop on the code of conduct for justices, judges and lawyers of the tribunal has covered 50 percent of judicial staff. They have to know what is proper or not in their respective milieu.

## Electronic payment system

An electronic payment system is being put in place to deter improprieties in face-to-face transactions, especially on fees that require discretion in appreciation.

Chief Justice Puno also has given strict instructions to monitor the judges' issuance of temporary restraining orders following allegations of "TROs for sale."

"It's had a chilling effect," says Dum Dum. Issuances of TROs by the Court of Appeals reached more than 60 during the first three months. Now, they have gone down to 20 to 30, Dum Dum says.

Getting the required budget from Congress is difficult. The tribunal's proposal for P12 billion has been slashed to P8 billion.

"The public expectation is so high when it comes to the delivery of judicial services and yet the resources that go to make these services efficient are not there," Dum Dum says.

## Court fees

The instruction from the budget department is to get the money from court fees. "It's not sufficient. You're dependent on something that's not fixed, because it will depend on how many cases are filed," Dum Dum says.

"We were informed that we spend about P600 million on the maintenance of halls of justice a year. But only P300 million is given by the Department of Budget Management. Where do we source that? We get it from the court fees."

"There's an impression that the wheels of justice turn faster for those who have money," Dum Dum says. "Somehow, that's correct because it's the rich who can afford the very good lawyers."

Sometimes, the good lawyers also spring the hired assassins loose, those responsible for the extrajudicial executions.

An efficient court could be the antidote.

# For wealthy litigants, sky's the limit for legal services

From page A1

sovereign learned his lesson.

This was after being told by police that she had to cough up P200 for the filing fee required to lodge a complaint in the prosecutor's office.

A lowly wage-earner with the law clearly on her side that day, Linda passed the chance to let the judiciary commence work for her; perhaps she would rather keep the P200 for her next cell phone "load."

Lawyer Noel Malaya, who shared this true story to the INQUIRER, actually had a punch line coming: The police ended up drawing from their own pockets just so a formal charge would be filed, lest they be cited for illegal detention and inflicting injuries on a suspect who had never been booked for anything.

## Costly for pauper litigants

It may be a petty incident, but Malaya considered this "a classic case" of how the country's legal system can be a costly proposition to litigants (or defendants) who utterly lack the means.

The collection of legal fees in criminal and civil proceedings is mainly considered a measure to augment the meager funding allotted to the country's judicial system, which gets less than 1 percent of the national budget each year.

A menu of supposedly minimal fees awaits the likes of Linda—as well as the robbery suspect—had she taken her quest for justice any further and had he, in turn, put up a fight.

Just having a complainant's affidavit sworn to before a pro-

secutor already entails a fee of P50, for example. The same rate goes for affidavits executed by witnesses.

A separate filing fee is required, depending on the type of offense—from P200 for theft, malicious mischief or oral defamation to P500 for car theft and P1,000 for libel.

## Support for court systems

A complaint dismissed after the preliminary investigation can be appealed to the Department of Justice, but such a petition for review will cost another P1,000.

If the case goes to trial, a party who wishes to get his or her own copy of the transcript of stenographic notes (TNS) must pay P10 per page. The fee provides extra income for the court stenographers.

The filing of subsequent motions also carries specific fees. A motion to postpone a hearing, for instance, which is among the most common pleadings the court entertains, charges P200.

But isn't the justice system supposed to be a free government service to the people?

Supreme Court spokesperson Jose Midas Marquez explained: "Fees should be rightfully paid by court users because the general public should not be expected to entirely shoulder the expenses of those who would like to file cases. As it is, the public already contributes to a large extent for the maintenance of the court system."

## Deterrent for nuisance cases

"Also, filing fees serve as a deterrent and discourages the fil-

ing of nuisance cases. To do away with filing fees would open the floodgates and inundate court dockets with vexatious and worthless cases," Marquez said.

According to the high tribunal's spokesperson, the fees go to the Judiciary Development Fund, where 80 percent of the collections become "additional allowance for court personnel," while 20 percent is allotted for the purchase of equipment needed by the courts.

The Supreme Court, through amendments made in 2000 to the Rules of Court, has "exempted indigent litigants" from paying fees, Marquez said. These are persons whose families have a gross monthly income not exceeding P4,000 if residing in Metro Manila, P3,000 if outside the region, and who do not own real property with a value of more than P50,000.

But in interviews with the INQUIRER, pro bono criminal lawyers—those who lend services as private prosecutors or defense attorneys for free—concede that their clients, cash-strapped but not poor enough to qualify for such exemptions, get discouraged from pursuing their cases because of the fees.

## Free legal aid

"Not all pro bono lawyers can pay everything for their clients all the time," said Al Gomos, a volunteer lawyer who pursues the "Prison Ministry" of the St. James The Great Parish in Ayala-Alabang, Muntinlupa City. Gomos said he preferred to

serve as defense lawyer in 80 percent of his pro bono cases, particularly to get some off the overloaded, undermanned Public Attorneys Office (PAO) in his locale, whose mandate is to defend indigent respondents in criminal cases.

The PAO provides free legal assistance to clients who "pass" its indigency test, or those certified to have monthly income lower than P14,000 in Metro Manila, or lower than P13,000 and P12,000 in other cities and municipalities, respectively.

"The fees have really become a deterrent for my clients to pursue cases," Gomos said, noting that filing fees in criminal cases were unheard of when he started law practice in 1991.

To Evelyn Ursua, an activist lawyer who served as pro bono private prosecutor in the celebrated Subic rape case, the whole idea has become akin to the "privatization" of the judiciary.

## Every move costs money

"It's actually a recent phenomenon; now you have to shell out money to sue and every move you make will cost you under a system wherein the state is supposedly duty-bound to prosecute a crime at no cost (to the injured party)," Ursua noted.

The current schedule of fees charged by the National Prosecution Service office under the DOJ took effect in September 2004.

"For the poorest among us (a swearing-in fee of) P50 plus the corresponding filing fee is not a

small sum, and it can multiply with every witness whom you tap for help," Ursua added.

This is on top of the other incidental expenditures, like having documents photocopied, securing stenographic notes if needed, and the sheer hassle of spending for every trip to the courthouse even for clients handled by pro bono lawyers.

And if legal fees to be paid up front could already discourage an indigent complainant or respondent, what more the professional fees charged by private lawyers?

## Lawyers' rates

Citing prevalent rates in the legal community in the capital, Gomos said a person charged with illegal drug possession, for example, should better be ready to part with at least P20,000 as "acceptance fee" should he or she decide to hire a private defense counsel.

From there, "appearance fees" are next to be considered. The amount is often computed based on the distance between the court hearing the case and the law office hired, he said.

Gomos said top-caliber Makati-based lawyers would charge at least P2,000 per court appearance in hearings within the city, and P3,000 if the hearing is held elsewhere in Metro Manila.

"You've already found a bargain with a lawyer based in Metro Manila who charges P3,000 per appearance," Ursua said.

If the hearing requires the lawyer to take a trip to some

provincial courthouse, he can already bill for up to P40,000 for half a day's work, she said.

Joe Nathan Tenebrancia, a senior partner in the law firm Villaraza & Anganco, also said that payments could be made according to "milestones" in the trial, which had been earlier agreed upon between lawyer and client.

## Billings

A milestone can be marked and fees paid, for example, after the lawyer has finished presenting his evidence, while the next billing can come after the opposing side has been cross-examined, Tenebrancia explained.

Some lawyers would rather charge by the hour, including time spent doing legal research or conferring with their clients on the phone.

Senior law firm partners could modestly earn up to P3,500 per hour under this scheme, while the more junior associates could start at P1,500 per hour, Gomos said.

## Sky's the limit

Usually under this setup, a client makes a deposit with the law firm, say P60,000, and the per-hour billing gets charged against this initial amount until it is used up and needs to be replenished, he explained.

"Sky is the limit; everything is determined by the client's ability to pay," Gomos said.

But alas, such are the transactions which the many jeepney-riding Lindas may never be part of.

# Amparo gives hope to search for justice

From page A1

justice system.

"I am grateful to the Supreme Court for responding to my problem. There is still good laws in our country," Rubrico, who chairs the Ugnayan ng Maralita para sa Gawa at Adhikain Federation, said in a phone interview.

The high court issued a writ of amparo in favor of Rubrico and her two daughters directing President Macapagal-Arroyo and military and police officials, among others, to respond to her petition in which she claimed that she was abducted and that she and her

daughters were harassed after her release.

A hearing on the petition in which Rubrico asked that the authorities be prevented from harming or approaching her and that kidnapping charges be filed against her abductors, was set on Nov. 13 at the Court of Appeals.

## Some measure of relief

Rubrico felt some measure of relief after the high court asked military and police officials to respond to her allegations. But she said she would return to her home in Dasmariñas, Cavite, only after the hearings on her petition were over and an order

from the court was issued.

Rubrico, 63, said that members of the 301st Air Intelligence and Security Squadron abducted her on April 3, 2007, and that she was detained at its base in Lipa City.

She also said she was made to sign a statement in which she agreed to become a military asset.

After her release on April 10, Rubrico and her family abandoned their home in Cavite, fearing that men in bonnets and ski masks, who had been following them and watching their home, would harm them.

One of Rubrico's daughters was also allegedly interrogat-

ed by a policeman.

## Protection, inspection order

A week after the rules for the writ of amparo took effect, Rubrico filed a petition with the Supreme Court on Oct. 30 seeking protection, an inspection order to determine her place of detention, and a production order to release documents about her.

She also sought P1.5 million in damages.

Named respondents in the petition were Ms. Arroyo; Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Espenon Jr.; Philippine National Police Director General Avelino Razon; the Office of the Ombudsman;

Major Darwin Sy; Capt. Angelo Cuarema; Supt. Edgar Quintero; Senior Insp. Arsenio Gomez; Jimmy Santana; Ruben Alfaro, and a certain Jonathan.

## Respond by Nov. 9

In issuing the writ, the high court directed the respondents to answer Rubrico's petition and submit their response to the Court of Appeals by Nov. 9.

The respondents will have to state the actions they have taken and those that they will still take, and their defense.

Under the writ of amparo, government agents are not allowed to simply deny the allegations against them. They must take ac-

tion to resolve the problem.

In answering a petition for a writ of amparo, the respondents must show that they did not violate or threaten the right to life, liberty and security of the aggrieved party.

They must also explain the steps they had taken to determine the fate of or find the aggrieved party and the persons responsible for the threat.

If the respondent is a public official, he should state what he did to identify the aggrieved party, recover evidence that may aid the prosecution, identify witnesses, tag and arrest the persons involved, and file charges against them.



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## Praying for the dead

**T**HE LONG WEEKEND THAT STARTS TODAY allows most Filipino Christians more time to observe the rites for the dead. It also gives the entire political class an opportunity to take stock, before the madness that is Philippine politics returns in full force next week.

Christians celebrate All Saints' Day to honor all saints, but especially the unknown. This is as it should be, because experience tells us that (to appropriate the language of the faith) many indeed labor in the vineyard of the Lord—but in anonymity, in obscurity.

### EDITORIAL

We are used to the tradition of the great saint, the miracle-worker who stands out from the rest of humanity: the gentle Francis of Assisi, the invincible Catherine of Siena, the tireless Teresa of Avila. In the Christian economy, these saints offer an example of formidable, even forbidding, holiness. But for every Augustine, one of the greatest of saints, there is a Monica—a simple, long-suffering mother who persevered in prayer, whose faith and good works helped prepare the ground for her famous son's conversion.

Monica, of course, has her own feast day, but other ordinary but exemplary Christians like her, especially those in the Christian church's first millennium whose personal holiness or acts of martyrdom led their communities to declare them saints by acclamation, only share in the general feast day of All Saints. It is these "little saints" that Christians honor today.

In this part of the Christian world, however, All Saints' Day is virtually absorbed into All Souls' Day, with the combined feast centered on the commemoration of the faithful departed.

The ancient Christian tradition of keeping vigil from the eve of the feast is partly responsible for this confusion; the modern-day secular sense of holidays (no longer as religious celebration, but as time away from work) is also responsible in part. The formulaic stories we see in print or on TV about reunion and revelry in the cemeteries, reflect this confusion.

The blurring of distinctions between the two great feast days is unfortunate, however, because the first is actually the answer to the question posed by the second.

The idea behind All Souls is an article of faith: souls separated from their bodies at death may not be cleansed of all sins; it is the task of the faithful left behind to help purge them through prayer. Implicit in the second feast is the indispensable question: Is there life after death?

The answer, explicit in the first feast, is an absolute yes. The continuing work of the saints is proof that, in the Christian understanding, death does not end life but only transforms it.

There is certainly no arguing that death is a kind of end. Can anything be more final than a plot of grass in a memorial park, or a tomb in a crowded cemetery? This is a Cartesian certainty that we can all agree on: rich or poor, overseas worker or resident citizen, convicted plunderer or hasty pardoner, death comes for us all.

Another certainty: None of us can bring our wealth and our power, whether hard-earned or illegally obtained, into the grave.

Also we remember that it was exactly at this time of the year, six years ago, when Joseph Estrada's key allies began to desert him. The road to the critical Cabinet resignations (including that of Trade Secretary Mar Roxas) and the sudden impeachment in the House of Representatives (executed by Speaker Manny Villar) wound its tortuous way through the feast of All Saints and All Souls—that time of the year when the entire political class gets an opportunity to take stock.

This year, there is certainly much to think about: alliances between the Palace and Congress, linkages between the opposition and the administration, relationships within the opposition and, not least, the specter of deadly scandals, each emitting that unmistakable carrion smell. Much of this is removed from the lives of ordinary Filipinos; none of it, however, is alien to the life of the faithful.

Between All Saints and All Souls, between heaven and purgatory: That about sums up where we are, at this time.



## Our prayers can help them reach Heaven

## Yesterday's men

### VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado



"ALL POLITICS IS LOCAL," FORMER US HOUSE of Representatives Speaker Thomas "Tip" O'Neill often stressed. Monday's 68 percent turnout of voters, who picked officials for 41,994 barangays, underscored that axiom.

Nationwide, barangay candidates fielded by embedded family dynasties seemed to dominate. But do "currents of change" swirl below the surface? At Laging Handa in Quezon City, former United Nations officer Ralph Diaz won by a landslide, beating TV personalities.

Or look at Cebu City. Mayor Tomas Osmeña considers it his fiefdom. In the June 2002 elections, we noted: "Arse kissing is the name of the barangay game here... *Somos o no somos?* (Are you for or against me?) Shouldn't deeds be the universal currency for governance?"

Five years later, Osmeña's massive machine again corralled 77 of 80 barangays. But the mayor was, again, clobbered where he's boasted his political machismo would be proved: in Lahug.

In the biggest barangay of Cebu's northern district, the incumbent chairwoman, Mary Ann de los Santos, swamped Osmeña's hand-picked candidate 9-to-1 despite patent fund lack. That landslide, anchored on her track record, swept her slate into office.

Did this remind you of John Kennedy's wisecrack on his father's fictitious telegram? We joshed Ms De los Santos. "Dear Jack," it read. "Don't buy more than a vote necessary. I'll be damned if I'm going to pay for a landslide."

No, she replied. "What I remember is Tomas saying: 'Mary Ann is nothing.' He forgot the people are everything. This is the sixth election I've run head-to-head against his proxies. And every time, he got trashed."

Why has a street-smart Osmeña always fielded mediocre candidates? As in earlier elections, he ladled time, funds and material to swamp De los Santos. In 2002 and 2007, he personalized the campaign. A vote for De los Santos' opponent is a vote for me, he insisted.

Egg splattered on his face after the landslide. Was this necessary? No. But it was inevitable.

This mayor believes he has all the answers—and acts accordingly. One crosses him at his own peril. This results in governance anchored on Osmeña's say so. The result are his nondescript candidates and sycophants. "Flattery is all right, as long as you don't inhale," Adlai Stevenson once cautioned.

Leaders worth the name look beyond themselves and their short tenure of office. Instead, they identify and nurture the growth of others (not their wives or children) for the day when they will have passed on. But is this possible with Osmeña's mind-set? Indeed "nothing grows under the shade of a banyan tree," the old Filipino proverb says.

This mayor takes political setbacks as a personal affront. Repeated whacking of his candidates festers in someone who thinks family name invests one with privilege. His get-even syndrome is always in overdrive.

To get back at De los Santos, Osmeña canceled construction of a 20-room Lahug schoolhouse. In addition, he threatened to scrub City Hall gasoline for Lahug garbage collection, daycare centers, drainage projects, etc.

"Nobody likes to see schoolchildren kicked in the teeth," the Cebu Daily News snapped.

"(This) is using spite in a dangerous way." He tucked tail.

Some 16 months back, Osmeña tried to gut Lahug's tax base by smudging map borders. Built-up areas—and their taxes—would be shunted to other barangays, his partisans ruled. Barangay financial castration is not a felony. Neither is it clinical lunacy. "But it is usurpation of office," Viewpoint noted last June.

Mayors have no power to scrub boundaries at whim. That's the function of local councils and, if need be, courts. Setting boundaries require criteria, so whim doesn't supplant reason. We court disaster if we forget what Justice John Marshall wrote: "The power to tax involves the power to destroy."

Osmeña has since asked his rubber-stamp technical office to give him a fig leaf which his rubber-stamp council will approve.

The Laging Handa and Lahug barangay land-slides are protests against arbitrary governance. It replays Pampanga, where citizens backed Fr. Ed Panillo against entrenched politicians. It reflects Naga City, where voters supported Mayor Jesse Robredo's transparent governance. And it echoes protests against the perversion of executive clemency for Joseph Estrada.

Investment in education and health are known as the "two pillars of development." They mobilize an individual's productive capacities. But "a new consensus ... is shaping that the third pillar of 21st-century development is promoting citizen participation," the United Nations Human Development Report notes. "People must have a say in decisions that affect their lives." That curbs hostage-taking of government by the elite, the bane of today's society.

Like the trounced Prospero Pichay and comedian Tito Sotto, are Joseph Estrada, the Lapid of Pampanga and Tomas Osmeña becoming yesterday's men? What's clear is that tomorrow belongs to those who broaden opportunities, so ordinary men and women can rise to more humane standards of living and, yes, leadership.

"We need to have a much larger sense of common responsibility for those suffering from the weakness, corruption, cruelty and disorder of bad government," John Kenneth Galbraith wrote in "The Affluent Society." That's the "currents of change" message swirling below the surface of those barangay polls.

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## Happy Halloween

### THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



I RECALL THAT "THE HORROR OF DRACULA," a Hammer movie that featured the formidable duo of Christopher Lee and Peter Cushing as Dracula and Van Helsing respectively, gave me a lot of sleepless nights. That has since become a classic, a pioneering effort in the genre, with its mixture of gore and lust—Dracula's sinking of fangs on women's necks took on the form of ravishment. I wasn't terribly aware of the movie's aesthetic merits then, but my nascent raging hormones allowed me to intuit the sensuality along with the horror. The sleepless nights owed to more than just the oppression of terror; they owed as well to diversion of wet dreams.

Though Naga was already a city in my childhood, it remained rustic in many respects. Not least where I lived, which was a fairly simple, if not impoverished, neighborhood not far from church. People slept early and woke up early. By 10 o'clock at night, the lights had gone out in most houses, and only the dull and solitary arc of light thrown by a lamppost near where we lived broke the darkness. On stormy days, when a wounded wind howled and a fearful dog bayed (folklore had it that dogs possessed acute instincts and could sense things humans could not, such as the bedraggled tread of souls that could not rest until they had finished unfinished business in this life), the fuzzy light from the lamppost only deepened the darkness.

I was grateful for the istambays who made life miserable for the older folk with their drunken caterwauling of Elvis' songs to the accompaniment of a guitar that seemed perpetually out of tune. The restless souls themselves might have wanted to avoid them. I missed them on the days when the irate elders or the irate heavens drove them out of their favorite hangout, which was a corner store nearby, with hard word or hard rain. The silence positively throbbed then, like the hearts of Dracula's victims.

Along with the sights and sounds of church and sacrament—the pealing of the bells in particular at Angelus signaled for me the beginning of night when angels and demons, Van Helsing

and Dracula, would come out to do battle on earth—Dimasalang, which was the name of our semi-asphalted street, took on the aspect of the eternal battleground. At least in my fevered imagination, it might as well have been Transylvania, the clip-clip clop of horses' hooves as a bone-tired *cochero* made his way home after a long day sounding the advent of the cloaked and fanged passenger inside to our neighborhood.

Perversely enough, I look at that exquisite fright today not without an ache of nostalgia. What can I say? The world grew older, and much wearier rather than wiser. The horror movies, as much a staple then as the Westerns, gave way to other amusements, or sources of terror, and I myself became a little too secular to be bedeviled by devils—of the otherworldly kind.

Though even now, in unguarded moments, notably when I suddenly wake up on some nights from having frazzled my nerves with work, or play, I would now and then be gripped by mindless terror. Fortunately, or unfortunately, the conscious part of me takes over swiftly and restores order to the universe. But truly, the mind is an awesome thing, though not without its afflictions. Behold the power of the unconscious. Behold the infantile, or primitive, fear of the dark. The things you learn as child will truly go with you the rest of your life and waylay you when you least expect it.

I haven't seen a horror movie in a long time that scared the bejesus out of me the way the horror movies (or the Tagalog horror comics) of my childhood did. Not even the ones about demonic possession. I never thought of the "The Exorcist" as one of the scariest horror movies of

all time despite the ad. I liked it as entertainment (William Friedkin did a creditable job with William Peter Blatty's best-selling potboiler), but in the context of the Vietnam War and the Idi-Amin-types that were springing everywhere then, no small thanks to Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger, it wasn't easy buying the idea of a metaphysical and transcendent evil wreaking havoc upon the world. Linda Blair's head-spinning and spitting out of green ooze didn't help. The power of suggestion will always be more frightening than the power of depiction.

I haven't seen a horror movie in a long time that gave me sleepless nights, but I have seen non-horror movies that have. Not the least of them movies about the Holocaust and the ones like "Hotel Rwanda." They're the ones that give you as close a glimpse of pure evil as you can find. More to the point, I haven't seen a horror movie in a long time that made me wake up at night in a cold sweat feeling malevolent presences in the dark, but I have felt a lot of malevolent presences in the light in my 56 years on this earth to give me sleepless nights.

I still believe in evil, just as I still believe in good. I no longer believe in an evil that exists outside of us—a cloven beast whispering devilry in our ears—but I believe in an evil that is produced by many of our thoughts and actions. The casual murder of a youthful activist is no less evil than the experimental slaughter of six million Jews, and they are all the more horrifying for being wrought not by otherworldly monsters but ordinary two-legged ones. I no longer believe in princes of darkness that can steal people's souls by biting their necks, but I believe in queens of darkness that can steal people's souls by anointing their bodies. I've seen what happens to friends who go to the Dark Side to not believe that people can lose their souls and become zombies.

I don't know about you, but I won't have a hard time choosing the most horrifying mask to wear on this day, or night, of horror. It ain't Dracula.

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## A season for statesmanship

THERE'S TALK THAT SOME GROUPS WILL MOVE against Speaker Jose de Venecia next Monday, when Congress resumes session, and seek to oust him. This is probably part of the larger destabilization being undertaken by enemies of President Macapagal-Arroyo, who seek to alienate her from her long-standing allies and thereby weaken her. Last week all the five deputy speakers agreed that they would not support any move to oust their leader. Moreover, reports say GMA has asked JDV to convert his appeal letter for "a new beginning for our nation" into a unity statement from both of them. I understand that three Cabinet members were assigned to work with two JDV staffers to craft it.

It is not in the interest of the nation to see the long-standing alliance between GMA and JDV shattered, because of the incessant *aisulol* of followers on both sides. The two leaders are being asked to put their differences and personal hurts aside and remain united in this time of crisis to push crucial legislation for sustained economic progress. This is a season for statesmanship.

As a follow up to the First National Conference on Climate Change sponsored by Albay Gov. Joey Saceda, Cecile Alvarez and I invited to our *dzRH* radio show (now aired at 8 to 8.45 p.m. Sunday) Dr. Rodel D. Lasco, one of the resource persons in Legazpi City. A Ph.D. holder in forestry from UP Los Baños with post-doctorate studies in Canada, he's connected with the International Centre for Research in Agroforestry based in Nairobi, Kenya. Lasco is one of four Filipinos who are part of a group of about 2,000 international scientists working in the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The IPCC, founded in 1989 by the United Nations Environmental Program and the World Meteorological Organization to study the effects of climate change, was a co-winner (with former US Vice President Al Gore) of this year's Nobel Peace Prize. The other three Filipino scientists are Doctors Rex Victor Cruz and Juan Pulhin, also of UP Los Baños, and Rosa Perez of Pagasa.

What was good about the Legazpi conference

### POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan



was that aside from dealing with the various phenomena aggravating global warming, it also helped inform the citizens about what they can do to avert this tragedy in our own localities. It's interesting to note that warnings about damage to the environment have become more and more shrill, so that climate change has become truly a concern of all inhabitants of Planet Earth, and not just of the developed countries. The other day the International Herald Tribune aired the UNEP's warning in its 4th Global Environmental Outlook since 1997 that the damage to the environment "could pass points of no return." Such phenomena as the rapid rise in so-called "dead zones," where marine life can no longer be supported because of the depletion of oxygen by fertilizers, and changing rainfall patterns that are transforming semi-arid zones into arid ones that kill plant life were stressed. It also identified potential crisis areas such as India, China and Africa, but heaped praise also on efforts in parts of Brazil to roll back deforestation in the Amazon.

NCCA Executive Director Cecile Alvarez has just come back from the Unesco conference in Paris, where, among other things, the crucial role of communication, e.g., plays, radio and TV talk shows and comics in delivering to the citizenry grave concerns about climate change was well stressed. We queried Lasco on doable measures to help the environment, and he cited recycling paper to help save our trees. In turn, trees sequester carbon dioxide, the main culprit among the greenhouse gases that harm the environment, and hold down the soil and water, thus helping fight both huge floods and water shortage. By the way, why did the Manila Golf Club in Makati City which reopened four days

ago, cut down so many trees in its renovation program? Was that act permitted by the DENR?

We also queried Lasco on that fascinating mechanism conceptualized at the 1997 Kyoto Conference to help reduce carbon emissions, the international "carbon market." It's a very technical concept, but from what he explained with the help of World Bank documents, this market as in any market, has both buyers and sellers. The Kyoto Protocol signed by 87 countries divided the world into the industrialized countries whose industries emit plentiful greenhouse gases and the developing countries whose economies still have relatively fewer problems in this regard. Under Kyoto's "Clean Development Mechanism," industrialized countries are committed to reduce emissions by 5 percent, but in many cases this is difficult to fulfill. But they buy "carbon credits" from the less developed economies.

For instance, the Payatas dump is the Philippines' first waste-to-energy project, generating electricity by burning methane, helping lessen the global warming effects of that gas. Richer countries can "buy" an estimated P12 million worth of carbon credits yearly from Payatas to help make up for their own deficiencies.

Indonesia, which will host the UN Climate Change Conference in Bali early next month, is making noises about preserving its forests through incentives like carbon credits. It's asking the rich countries to pay as much as \$20 per hectare so that it will preserve its dwindling forests.

World Bank records show that last year, the carbon market grew in value to an estimated \$30 billion, three times more than that of the previous year. Analysts estimate that as of March this year, about \$11.8 billion has been invested in 58 "carbon funds," compared to \$4.6 billion in 40 funds as of May last year. I asked Lasco whether buying carbon credits from poorer countries wouldn't encourage the rich countries to be more profligate in using the world's precious resources. He said this is the reason that a ceiling of 1 percent has been set on the credits that can be bought by the rich economies.

## 'Dies irae, dies illa'

### HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo



But there is still heaven and hell and purgatory. You either believe or you don't.

Recently I had lunch with a known literary figure and his wife and as we discussed the disgusting political circus, the corruption, the lies and the betrayals, he said something like, "I don't know what the afterlife would be like, but one thing is certain, each of us will be judged."

"Dies irae," with its arresting tone and somewhat terrifying but hopeful message, will certainly remain a liturgical musical classic. (I think it was sung at Princess Diana's funeral.) There are many translations of the 18-stanza Latin original.

*Dies irae, dies illa, Solvet saeculum in funera, Teste David cum Sibylla.* (That day of wrath, that dreadful day, When heaven and earth will pass away, Both David and Sybil say...) The theme was derived from the prophet Zephaniah's words which should strike fear in the hearts of the corrupt leaders of this land. Why, even last Monday's barangay election, which is supposed to be closest to home and our everyday lives, was not entirely cheating-free.

Zephaniah's biblical wrath is for those who remain incorrigible: "Jerusalem is doomed, that corrupt, rebellious city that oppresses its own people. It has not listened to the Lord or accepted his discipline. It has not put its trust in the Lord or asked for his help. Its officials are like roaring lions, its judges are like hungry wolves, too greedy to leave a bone until morning. The prophets are irresponsible and treacherous, the priests defile what is sacred, and twist the law of God to their

own advantage. But the Lord is still in the city..."

Oh, but he ends with a song of joy. And I can't help but think literally of the millions of OFWs toiling abroad. "I will bring your scattered people home, I will make you famous throughout the world and make you prosperous once again."

That should bring tears to our eyes. But as to striking fear in our hearts, thus much-admired translation of "Dies irae" by Dr. W.J. Jones should do the job. Nature is very much a part of the scenario, so defilers of the environment, hearken and heed.

*Day of wrath and doom impending, David's word and Sibyl's blending! Heaven and earth in ashes ending!*

*Oh, what fear man's bosom rendeth, When from heaven the judge descendeth, On whose sentence all dependeth!*

*Death is struck, and nature quaking, All creation is awaking, To its judge an answer making.*

*Lo! The book exactly worded, Wherein all hath been recorded, Thence shall judgment be awarded.*

*When the Judge His seat attaineth, And each hidden deed arraigneth, Nothing unavenged remaineth*

*Righteous judge! For sin's pollution, Grant Thy gift of absolution, Ere that day of retribution.*

On the lighter side, All Saints and All Souls will remain among the Filipinos' favorite feasts. Only Filipinos can celebrate these feasts with so much fun and laughter. Until the West introduced the grossly macabre into our feasting, these feasts were religious and ethnic in nature, solemn but family-oriented and fun too.

As we celebrate these days, let us remember not just the special human beings in our lives who have gone ahead of us. Let us also remember the non-humans, the other creatures that have enriched our lives and this planet. We are all part of a web, of a cycle of life.

A glorious All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day

Send feedback to [ceresp@info.com.ph](mailto:ceresp@info.com.ph)

## Executive clemency

IN ANCIENT SOCIETIES, KINGS AND EMPERORS were judges, juries and executioners all rolled into one. Today, the power of presidents to grant pardons is a reminder that in the past, justice was usually in the hands of one man, and therefore mercy was as much a matter of a king's or emperor's whims, as was the administration of justice.

Here is the dilemma, then, between what pardoning is supposed to achieve—tempering justice with mercy—and the pardoning power being in the hands of those who may not wield power with either justice or mercy in mind.

Whatever the actual circumstances, for the generation alive during the revolution and beyond, a powerful legend arose. Ruzal's mother, according to the legend, climbed Malacatang's stairs on her knees. A very Filipino thing to do, what mother would not abase herself to beg for her son's life, particularly when the law is inexorably—and unfairly—enforced?

And this points to the reason our presidents have eagerly used their pardoning power. After centuries of an essentially alien and arbitrary legal system, Filipino chief executives had to prove they were more capable of dispensing justice, than their predecessors, the foreign governors-general.

President Manuel L. Quezon said he always commuted death sentences with that legend in mind. He himself liked going to Bilibid and gathering the convicts to hear their appeals. Press accounts of the time record his listening to the appeals and deciding whether to grant clemency on the spot.

For political crimes, though, he was more inclined to be cautious than in judging the cases of the poor.

The Supreme Court on Oct. 26, 1932, upheld a lower court's ruling resulting in 20 communist leaders being sentenced to eight years and one day of "destierro" or banishment to the provinces. The American communist James Allen, in pursuit of a united front policy against fascism, approached Quezon for the internal exile to be lifted. This was granted on Dec. 31, 1936. An absolute pardon was granted on Christmas Eve, 1938. There was no rush to clemency.

In a country where every chief executive

### THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III



makes a personal commitment to "do justice to every man," it is a powerful reminder of how our presidents are viewed as having a personal relationship with every citizen. I cannot think of any president who did not use the power to pardon and commute sentences, but most exercised this power with a bias for the poor, and greater prudence in the case of political crimes.

President Manuel Roxas didn't pardon people accused of treason, but he did issue an amnesty proclamation covering acts of treason, with the concurrence of Congress. In 1948, Jose P. Laurel could accept amnesty, because up to then, it didn't require an admission of guilt.

President Elpidio Quirino, in an effort to prevent civil war, tried offering amnesty on June 21, 1948 to the Hukbalahap, but by August that year, negotiations had broken down.

But since 1963, accepting amnesty, according to the Supreme Court, requires an admission of guilt, which has made it less effective as a means to heal past divisions.

Where Quirino was more successful was in granting pardon to Japanese war criminals. He pardoned Japanese prisoners convicted of crimes against the citizenry during the occupation. The public, in general, accepted Quirino's grant of executive clemency to foster the healing of the wounds of war. Quirino had the moral ascendancy to grant such a pardon because the Japanese had killed his wife and all but two of his children. If a President, who'd suffered so harshly at the hands of the Japanese could find it in his heart to forgive them in the nation's name, the nation could accept it.

Ramon Magaysay criticized many pardons granted by his predecessor, Quirino, but also granted pardons to the poor and to former Huk

willing to surrender.

President Carlos P. Garcia, in turn, was criticized by Diosdado Macapagal for freely granting pardons shortly before he left office. In his memoirs, President Diosdado Macapagal recalled that from his jail, Huk leader Luis Taruc petitioned for executive clemency and for a general amnesty to political offenders. In exchange, Taruc said, former rebels would support the President's social welfare program. Macapagal refused.

There was one spectacular case where Macapagal provoked outrage on the part of the public, because it felt he used his powers to get someone off the hook. The Lucio Tan of the 1950s and 1960s was an American named Harry Stonehill, a big shot in the tobacco business. Justice Secretary Jose W. Diokno mounted an investigation that revealed Stonehill had been freely and lavishly giving financial contributions to dozens of prominent politicians, including Senate President Ferdinand Marcos and possibly Macapagal himself.

His arrest and trial would have devastated the political class. But the public outrage was so strong, Stonehill had to be arrested. On Aug. 3, 1962, Macapagal ordered Stonehill deported. And then, he fired Diokno.

Marcos used his powers tactically, of course. He eventually released Taruc and thereby gained the former Huk leader's support. He allowed Ninoy Aquino to seek medical treatment abroad, on condition the latter would refrain from participating in politics, a condition he promptly ignored once in exile.

President Corason Aquino released political prisoners and then found her government constantly under attack from those she had freed. President Fidel Ramos arranged amnesties for the Aquino era rebels, most particularly the leftists, Muslims and rightist soldiers. This enabled political closure but not, as Alfred McCoy's book "Closer than Brothers" discusses, moral closure for the military's human rights violations.

These cases shouldn't overshadow the much larger number of ordinary people who find the cold steel of the law tempered by presidential compassion.

## A toast to Onin

IT HAS BEEN MORE THAN A WEEK SINCE THAT FATEFUL Friday, and I still hear his voice when I sleep at night. I wake up and stare at the ceiling for 10 minutes—or is it 20? I think to myself, "I'm going to be late." But I don't move for another five minutes.

I stare blankly at my breakfast plate and finish my coffee in hurried gulps. I walk my usual path, listening to the usual morning sounds. I strain to hear his familiar laughter wafting through the air. I work my sadness off. I tire myself trying to drive the negativity away. Oh, and I smoke again; it seems to me that every puff brings me closer to him.

I just cannot believe that he's gone.

After all, he's Onin. Onin who made each day at work seem like playtime. Onin who brought an extra sandwich each morning, because he knew I rarely ate breakfast before I left the house. Onin who made me laugh at the oddest times: at lunchtime while standing in line at the cafeteria, in the sleepy hours of the afternoon, and in between sobs. Onin who bugged us to buy Happy Meals for merienda so that he could have the free toys that he would bring home to his 4-year-old son.

He loved his family so much. His stories were always about his little one, or his Mommy and Daddy, or his brother, or one of his cousins. He always put them first on his list of priorities. His plans were always tailored to what would be best for them.

I was in denial for a long time. From the moment I got the first text message, to the anxious hours of searching for him at the Makati Medical Center and Ospital ng Makati, up until the night I looked at him inside the coffin, I could not accept the painful reality that my good friend had departed. But then again, who would have thought that a person so full of life and who gave so much would go ahead of us?

All of Onin's friends and loved ones were distraught. A dark cloud hovered over the Vidamo residence on the first night of the wake. Mass was said with everyone present in tears. It started with discreet sniffs and burst out in loud wails of anger, grief and despair. The priest did not bother to stop the ceremony to comfort the family members. He let them be.

"Life is a mystery, and I do not have answers," he said in his homily. For me, that was the best that anybody could do: to let Onin's family give free expression to the mixed emotions they were feeling. To let them deal with all of these together is to respect them. It is like saying that you feel for them, but you cannot truly comprehend how difficult this tragedy must be for them.

Unfair. That's what it is. Not only to Onin's family, but to all those who lost their loved ones in that explosion in Glorietta 2 last Oct. 19. My heart goes out even to those who have been scarred by the blast, not only in the physical sense, but deep inside where the marks last forever.

Absurd. That's what the heartless perpetrators did. That is, if the tragedy was another act of terrorism, a bombing plotted to make us all cower.

Polluted by politics. That's what the whole investigation seems to me. And having Madame President visiting the mall just days after the incident and waving to the press was not cute at all.

I remember the last time Onin and I talked. He had invited me to have a few drinks. I promised we'd go out during my break from my grade school classes. Little did I know that I would not have the chance to fulfill that promise.

Onin's death made me pause in a way that my busy life would not have allowed. It's such a cliché, but I realize that life is short, indeed. Each moment, precious. So, I know I have to move forward.

I'm done with crying. Aside from the fact that I've cried my eyes out in one weekend, I can hear Onin telling me, "Ayusin mo nga 'yang mukha mo (Why don't you fix your face?)." That was what he always told me every time I cried.

So, Onin, I am speaking for all the people whose lives you've touched: Thank you, *pare*. I raise my glass to you, for the joys you brought to our hearts and the life that you so generously shared. You've inspired us all. Cheers.

Patricia Palea Orjalo, 25, is an IT consultant at RCG IT Philippines. "Onin" is Niño Cesar Vidamo, one of the 11 victims who were killed in the Glorietta 2 explosion.

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### THEY SAID

#### Separation

"I have come to the painful determination that the time has come to separate my person from the office I now occupy."

—Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos, announcing his resignation amid the NBN scandal

#### Quick surrender

"The boxing match had not started yet, but he already threw in the towel."

—Ruling Vice Gov. Rolan Sulica on the resignation of Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos

#### Independent

"Modesty aside, I have been independent all my political life. Nobody can order me around, not even the President, not even the Chief Justice, except probably my wife [Las Piñas Rep. Cynthia Villar]."

—Senate President Manny Villar, reacting to Sen. Jamby Madrigal's charge that a powerful businessman had influenced him to prod Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano into shifting gears in the inquiry into the National Broadband Network scandal

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# 'Stop thinking negatively'

ON THE GRANT OF PARDON TO former President Joseph Estrada, I would like to say that Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo just exercised her presidential prerogative to extend executive clemency. Having been President for sometime, she already understands governance in this small and poor country fully well. This country has had its economic ups and downs primarily due to its people's character and

behavior, not for lack of natural resources. In this particular sense, whether it was a personal or political exercise, the granting of pardon was a personal decision and did good for somebody. Therefore, we should stop casting aspersions on her good act, we are all human beings, after all. Our insistence on what we think will only put more political color to a simple act of

mercy that comes from the heart. Please understand that human beings cannot foresee the consequences of an act. We should stop thinking negatively and remove this obstacle to a brighter future for our nation. Let's learn to see what is right and do away with those "perceptions" that are normally destructive. —JUSTO NANG, [jing@gmail.com](mailto:jing@gmail.com)

## Mining just one of Sibuyan's woes

THE TWO RELATED FRONT PAGE articles in the INQUIRER's Oct. 5 issue—"When governance fails: Murder in the Island" and "Announcing activist shot dead by guard"—bring into focus a much larger problem that besets the Sibuyanons, aside from the mining controversy.

As a Romblomanon, I know what is happening there, but nobody seems to listen or care unless these things get into national newspapers.

Sibuyan Island stands out as a vivid portrait of government neglect. The roads around Sibuyan are too bad. There are no plans to pave the bumpy 95-kilometer circumferential road that connects three towns of the island. It is obvious that government funds allocated annually for this road are diverted.

Even the P20-million road upgrading project from Azagra to Tacloban in San Fernando, which is being implemented by a private contractor, is reported to be at a "standstill." The project was funded by the Department of Agriculture last March to improve travel for farmers and the commuting public. People say the private contractor has turned the road from bad to worse and work has stopped because there are no more funds. Abandoned projects such as this one are common in the province.

There is no banking facility in the whole of Sibuyan. People travel to the capital town of Romblon by sea for hours to make a deposit

or a withdrawal, or to pay for their loans, or to encash their checks.

There is no regional trial court in Sibuyan. There is an airport in San Fernando, but no airplanes land there; only motorcycles and "pedicabs"—and stray animals—make use of this facility, an airfield once upon a time. There is a fish port in Azagra, San Fernando, but it is already silted after years of neglect. There is another wharf in Cajidiocan, but the only passenger ship going there has stopped sailing there.

The only hospital in Cajidiocan is ill-equipped. Stroke patients are transported to Batangas or Manila, going through the most heart-rending experience—via a circuitous route through Romblon (another island) or Odiongan (in Tablas)—for long hours.

Tuberculosis is common among the poor population. That is expected, say local physicians, because the people are too poor to provide themselves three square meals a day.

Rice, fruits, vegetables and chicken are imported from Manila, Batangas and Capiz. Fish is abundant during calm weather. Otherwise, people eat canned goods, dried fish, or cornote.

These are just among the woes of Sibuyan. The people's campaign against mining here only dramatizes their decades-old suffering from what the INQUIRER described as "failed governance."

—RAMON M. GUTIERREZ, editor, Romblon Islander, [peoplecongress@yahoo.com](mailto:peoplecongress@yahoo.com)

## Why not elect the MMDA chief?

THIS HAPPENED A COUPLE OF years ago. I was having a kitchen knife sharpened in Quisno. As I looked out the window, I saw a vendor slip a P500 bill into the shirt pocket of a Manila policeman. Of course, bribery is always bad. But what was worse was that it was done right at the height of an anti-vendor, sidewalk-clearing operations of the Metro Manila Development Authority.

So we have one set of policemen kicking vendors out, and another set of policemen getting payoffs for letting vendors control the sidewalk.

Why do we have two sets of policemen—one from the city, the other from the MMDA? And why do we have a non-elected MMDA chief? It may be recalled that it was President Ferdinand Marcos who appointed Imelda Marcos to the position of Metro Manila governor. To this day, the president appoints the MMDA chief.

Now, I have nothing against Bayani Fernando. In fact, I think he is doing a good job. The problem lies with the mayors, who do not cooperate with him. But really, what are the MMDA powers, and what are the powers of the mayors? They often disagree with each other. Besides, Fernando was never elected by the people, so the mayors use this as a reason to ignore him.

Why not have Congress enact a law that will require the election of the MMDA head by the voters of the metropolis? In this way, the mayors can work together as members of a mega-city council and will have the power over the MMDA's activities and budget.

If such a law cannot be passed, then why not have the mayors elect—on a proportional basis, based on population—the chief of the MMDA? He would then get the cooperation of the mayors.

Either of these suggestions would solve the problems of overlapping jurisdictions and useless arguments over policy implementations. After all, it is really a waste of taxpayers' money to see a bunch of MMDA officers in one intersection facing a group of city policemen, each of them interpreting traffic regulations their own way. Not only is this a waste of money; it also deprives city residents their right to democracy.

—JONATHAN POE, 951 Ma. Cristina St., Sampaloc, Manila

## Inaccurate news on cataract surgery?

IN HER ARTICLE "PHILHEALTH says it's healthy" (INQUIRER, 10/21/07), Beverly T. Natividad quoted the spokesperson of the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines as saying that a simple cataract surgery costs P7,000.

Before even publishing the statement, she should have verified first the accuracy of this piece of information because of the dire consequences it could have to the reading public and the medical community.

She could have simply contacted the Philippine Academy of Ophthalmology (8135318) for more accurate information.

—JOHN MARK S. DE LEON, M.D., 12 Torrea Bugallon St., Tierra Pura, Quezon City 1107

I verified this information with two eye doctors who conduct cataract surgery. They said the cost of a cataract surgery may go as high as P40,000 per eye.

In public and other hospitals charging lower rates, however, the cost may be as low as P7,000 to P10,000 depending on the type of surgery. The two doctors said P7,000 was a good estimate for a cataract surgery.

—BEVERLY T. NATIVIDAD, reporter, INQUIRER

## GSIS policy didn't amend RA 660

WE WOULD LIKE TO EXPLAIN the five-year lump sum payment for Julio G. Sevilla Jr., who retired from government service last May 31, 2007 under Republic Act 660 ("May GSIS amend act of Congress?" INQUIRER, 10/11/07).

After the Government Service Insurance System processed the requirements for Sevilla's retirement, which took effect last June 1, 2007, he was paid his one-year lump sum on June 29, 2007. The amount covered the period from his retirement date to June 30, 2008. What he has recently requested is the full payment of the four-year balance of his annuity or pension benefit.

Sevilla might have overlooked our explanation in our letter, dated July 13, 2007 (or two weeks after the release of his one-year lump-sum payment) to him. We told him that per Board Resolution No. 1998 dated Oct. 19, 1963, requests for payment of the succeeding yearly lump sum under RA 660, as amended, may be allowed, provided the request is

made not earlier than six months before the benefit is due.

Since Sevilla's additional lump sum will be due on July 1, 2008, he can only request for it starting Dec. 29, 2007.

It should be stressed that such payment schedule, which is not a new policy of the GSIS, neither denies nor diminishes the pension benefit that is due him.

The GSIS did not amend RA 660. But for its effective implementation, the same law empowers the GSIS Board of Trustees to formulate rules and guidelines that specify the period and conditions of granting pension benefits, taking into account the retirees' welfare and the sustainability of the pension fund both for its present and future beneficiaries.

We hope we have sufficiently answered Sevilla's inquiry.

—ELLA E. VALENCERINA, vice president, Public Affairs Office, Government Service Insurance System, Financial Center, Pasay City

## Filipino people are tired of lies

"AFTER DENIALS, LOCAL OFFICIALS own cash gifts." (INQUIRER, 10/24/07) But the national president of the League of Provinces of the Philippines (LPP), Gov. Joel Reyes of Palawan, and the group's secretary general, Gov. Ben Evardone of Eastern Samar, could only give lame explanations.

First of all, the LPP does not have a resolution authorizing the release of P500,000 each to the governors of Pampanga and Bulacan. Second, the LPP is hard up on funds. How could it prioritize Pampanga and Bulacan, both rich provinces, as the first beneficiaries of its "capacity-building program"? This is simply stupid. Third, how could it give away P500,000 of the

people's money without receipts? This is outright irresponsible.

The LPP says it was able to meet only much later because its national president just arrived from abroad. How could the LPP have distributed the money with its president (who, according to its constitution, is the final approving authority for the release of LPP funds), out of the country? Was he already really out of the country? Gov. Eddie Panilio told the media about the cash gift immediately after he received it.

I think this matter should really be pursued until the truth comes out. The people are tired of lies.

—RUBEN TAYCO, [rubentayco2004@yahoo.com](mailto:rubentayco2004@yahoo.com)

# OPINION

## LETTERS



A MEMBER of an anti-graft group expresses her opposition to the Estrada pardon

FILE PHOTO

## GMA's resignation: The Filipinos' only way to salvation

WHEN PRESS SECRETARY AND Acting Executive Secretary Ignacio Bunye announced that Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo had signed the executive clemency papers for disgraced leader Joseph Estrada, I blurted out, "It's over."

GMA just dug her own grave. She made a very big blunder. It will not be long before groups who comprise the motley Edsa 2 crew will unite with other anti-GMA groups and form a formidable movement. It will not be long for the military and the masses to realize that justice here is double standard. And it will not be long before everything boils "super hot" for GMA and her advisers to handle.

The grant of pardon was totally irregular. It was made when GMA was mired in so many scandals and controversies. GMA was pressured to issue the pardon or was made to believe that there

would be dire consequences should Erap be sent to the New Bilibid Prisons. Whatever the reason, I believe that we can't really progress if we have a government under siege. GMA will always succumb to pressures—even sell the entire country for a song—just to remain in power. Resignation is our only salvation.

—RICKY RIVERA, [ricky.rivera@gmail.com](mailto:ricky.rivera@gmail.com)

## Abueva has rightful 'interest' in MSU presidency

THIS REFERS TO THE LETTER "Abueva's interest in MSU intriguing." (INQUIRER, 10/3/07)

I am not defending Dr. Jose Abueva but let us give credit where credit is due. The man can have a heart for Mindanao State University, like Bobby Lim, Halil Lucman and other MSU alumni. It cannot be denied that the man has been a part of MSU, and has served it well.

I saw how Abueva, with all sincerity, spent time and energy as chair of the committee formed by the Palace to look for the next MSU president. After months of rigorous "screening" the committee submitted its findings and recommendations. Surprisingly (reportedly due to differences among Lanao politicians close to the Palace), retired Gen. Ricardo de Leon (not one of the recommendees) was appointed as transition president for one year, to clear MSU from internal security threats and pave the way for the next regular president.

Nobody can refute a sound arrangement. But after one year,

suddenly there's a move patently laced with personal and political motives—to make De Leon a permanent president. This move, well-oiled it seems, practically caught everybody flatfooted, including Abueva and the members of his committee. Lim and Lucman claim that all alumni, deans, faculty, staff and all campuses support this move. But not a few see this as violative of the existing university code, policies and rules.

Also, this move will put to waste the time, energy and effort painstakingly invested by the Search Committee. I can't imagine Abueva et al. watching in awful silence or in complete surrender as their noble task is rendered useless. Therefore, I cannot agree with the view that Abueva's interest in MSU is intriguing.

MSU is not a political arena. I can bet my last cent that no alumnus in his right senses would allow MSU to rot to the core just because of politics. I can only wish that the alumni will not be drawn into politics to the detriment of MSU.

We all agree, as has been our battle cry, to shield and insulate MSU from partisan politics. We, the alumni, may not have the power to influence, but the least we can do is keep the lines open and be liberal in the treatment of things coming our way. Let us not muddle up things. Let us not add to the confusion. Pardon me, but I respectfully submit that the issue is neither leadership, religion, personalities or the continuity of positive change. The issue is adherence to the rule of law and the genuine principles of academic freedom.

Finally, let us give everyone his just due. General De Leon and his predecessors deserve our applause and the testimony of good conscience. But, let us not deprive Abueva of the respect due him. He has nothing for MSU, its alumni and the community but sincerity, goodness of heart, peace and goodwill. Mabuhay ang MSU!

—MUSA CALI SARUANG, past president, MSUAA, Marawi City, [mcsaruang@yahoo.com](mailto:mcsaruang@yahoo.com)

## Transsexual women

### COMMENTARY

Belinda A. Aquino

HONOLULU—THIS IS NOT AN EASY PIECE to write. It's probably the most unusual and unprecedented case the Philippine Supreme Court has had to deal with in its history. It will be many, many years before the high court can have some kind of "transgender law" to guide its future deliberations on transgender cases.

The Court recently denied the petition of Rommel Jacinto Danes Silverio, a transsexual, to change the entries in his birth certificate in the Office of the Civil Registrar—specifically, his gender from male to female and his first name to "Mely." This despite the fact that Silverio had undergone what is technically called a "sex-reassignment surgery" in Bangkok in 2001 to become a biological woman. The Court, however, ruled that while the petitioner "may have succeeded in altering his body and appearance through the intervention of modern surgery, no law authorizes the change of entry as to sex in the civil registry for that reason. There is no special law in the country governing sex reassignment and its effect. This is fatal to petitioner's case." The Court concluded that it is up to Congress, if it chooses, "to determine what guidelines should govern the recognition of the effects of sex reassignment."

The riveting story of Rommel/Mely Silverio is detailed in an intimate Internet account titled "My Life as a Transsexual Woman," which he/she divides into: (1) pre-gender transition from birth to 1995; (2) pre-surgery days in Hawaii from 1996 to 2000; and (3) post-surgery life in the Philippines from 2001 to the present.

It was as a doctoral student in Sociology at the University of Hawaii at Manoa that I came to know Rommel very well. His late mother Anita I knew back in Manila. He was all of 230 pounds but over time I could notice a gradual change in his appearance. He had embarked on a regimen of female hormone pills and estrogen shots. I teasingly told him one day that he was becoming "sexy" but to

be "careful." By the end of 1996, he had already lost 50 pounds. He continued the routine until he lost another 30 pounds. So by now, he was down to 155 pounds evenly distributed in his 5'8" frame. He was becoming a woman and gaining a "greater sense of self-esteem and confidence."

He went on to defend his dissertation on youth sexual behavior in 2000, and had acquired a "boyfriend" who consented to have him go to Bangkok for the sex change. For about three hours, a renowned Thai surgeon performed vaginoplasty and breast augmentation, increasing her breast size from A to D. Her recovery and post-surgery therapy lasted 18 months, after which she introduced her boyfriend, the man she was going to marry, to her family.

While Rommel had become Mely, for which she was ecstatic, several problems arose. The name on her passport was that of a man and inspectors couldn't reconcile this with the tall, svelte and well-dressed woman standing in front of them. She had to have two sets of documentation all the time to attest to the fact that Rommel and Mely were one and the same. Bank personnel would do all sorts of checking, so she would seek out only those that already knew her to avoid any confusion and embarrassment. And so on. She could have easily come back to the United States where she wouldn't have these hassles.

But discriminatory comments such as that the Philippines is not ready for transsexual women like her only increased her resolve to be treated equally and justly. Such remarks only "added fuel to my desire to be regarded as a professional colleague, to be treated with respect as a woman, and to be

given a fair chance at life in general." She escalated her personal struggle to attain "full legal recognition as a woman here in the Philippines, my country of birth" by petitioning the courts to change her gender and first name. The Court of Appeals denied her petition, which was a devastating blow. I am certain that the Supreme Court verdict upholding the lower court was even more devastating.

So, what now? I have great compassion for Mely—whom I will always remember as Rommel—who is really a very bright and likable individual. What does it matter really—Rommel or Mely, man or woman—it's the same human being! And she has gone through the whole process with extreme pain of validating the essence of her identity and humanity. What more can we ask? But the law as they say is cruel, but it's the law.

As a footnote, the large majority of transsexual (TS) transitions work out very well, over the long term as documented in Lynn's "Transsexual Women's Successes." However, in some cases, complete TS transitions "fail to meet very unrealistic expectations, and way too late the transitioner may realize that undergoing sex reassignment surgery (SRS) was a BIG mistake." Among the "regretters" is Renee Richards, who was born a male but transitioned as a female via surgery in 1975 at age 40 and became a famous tennis player. She wished she had not done it, but too late. She realized she would always be seen as a transsexual and never as a real woman that she had earlier hoped to become.

My only hope for Rommel/Mely is that she won't regret the biggest decision she made in her life, and that society will become increasingly tolerant, if not accepting, of diversity in all its possible senses and meanings.

Belinda A. Aquino is director of Philippine Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa where she has been professor of Political Science and Asian Studies.



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# Only 40 villages left in Army 'clearing'



POLITICAL TENSION and threats to the rule of President Macapagal-Arroyo prompt the military to send these troops to Metro Manila.

JOAN BONDOC

## Troops say Luzon NPA-free this year

CAMP OLIVAS, PAMPANGA—THE GOVERNMENT'S antinsurgency campaign has reduced the communist rebellion in Central Luzon, the same place where it began in 1969, to a "very minimal" level, the region's top military commander said.

The campaign in the "priority areas" of Bulacan and Nueva Ecija, for instance, is now on its "clearing stage," said Maj. Gen. Juanito Gomez, commander of the Army's 7th Infantry Division.

"We're concluding the work in the villages. At the end of the year, these would have been cleared already," Gomez said, referring to some 40 villages in the two provinces.

He said troops there had "seized the conditions to defeat insurgency" and the "developmental components by local governments and police are coming in."

Troops, clustered in special operations teams (SOTs) of

nine or 12 soldiers, have remained deployed, an approach began during the stint of Gomez's predecessor, Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, in 2005.

In Palparan's time, nearly 300 villages in the region had been fielded with SOTs.

Col. Rommel Gomez, commander of the Army's 703rd Infantry Brigade, said the 3rd and 58th Infantry Battalions, had flushed out two New People's Army units operating in Bulacan.

"We beat the Front 1 and Front 2 in Bulacan. The NPAs are already out of the areas. We are sustaining efforts there," he said.

He said the rebels had fled to

the hinterlands of the Sierra Madre Ranges in Doña Remedios Trinidad in Bulacan and General Nakar in Quezon.

The military has been monitored to have also concentrated troops in the Zambales-Pangasinan boundary.

"Definitely, we are succeeding in the campaign," Gomez said.

He said he has not requested additional funding for what he called the "sustaining phase" of the antinsurgency drive, which President Macapagal-Arroyo wanted to be concluded by 2009.

The NPA, armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines, and its rival army, Rebolusyonaryong Hukbong Bayan of the Marxist-Leninist Party of the Philippines, have not issued statements on their strengths and how the government's reinvigorated campaign has affected them. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*

## NEWSBRIEFS

### 5 held for killing of cop

TLUGUEGARAO CITY—Police arrested a former Army soldier and four others after witnesses identified them as suspects in the Oct. 28 killing of a policeman in Alcala, Cagayan.

Senior Supt. Jude Wilson Santos, Cagayan police director, said the police have filed murder charges against former Army Sgt. Dionisio Bancolita Magno, Dionisio Florentino and sons James and Chester, and Virgilio Ricardo, for shooting and killing PO1 Jackson Casil in Barangay Afus ng Daga, Alcala.

Santos said Magno, James Florentino and Ricardo ran for village council members while Dionisio Florentino ran for village chief of Afus ng Daga in the Oct. 29 elections.

They lost in the elections. The suspects shot Casil after Casil chased their van when it drove past a police checkpoint.

*Villamor Visaya Jr., Inquirer Northern Luzon*

### Thieves break into courier office

DIGOS CITY—While police had their hands full for Monday's youth and village elections, a group of thieves broke into the office of courier giant LBC here on Sunday and ran away with nearly P500,000 in cash.

Reynaldo Arbues, LBC branch manager, said the suspects gained entry by destroying the locks at the building's backdoor.

Arbues said the suspects took P467,000 in three days of collection from the branch's vault. *Orlando Dimoy, Inquirer Mindanao*

### Mati execs reopen cemetery

CITY OF MATI, Davao Oriental—The city government has decided to allow the reopening of a private cemetery here, which was earlier shut down for alleged violation of local business laws.

"For humanitarian reason, we will reopen the Golden Valley Memorial Park on the day of the dead. But it will only be for two days. After that, it will be closed again," Vice Mayor Cesar de Erio said yesterday.

De Erio said the decision was prompted by requests from those with relatives buried at the Golden Valley Memorial Park.

"And we sympathize with the clients of that company because it is not their fault that the private cemetery was ordered closed. It was the fault of the officials of the Golden Valley Cemetery because they were operating without a business permit," he said.

The Golden Valley Memorial Park is the only private and up-class cemetery in Davao Oriental.

Among the prominent persons buried there was Judge Eugenio Vasquez, who was assassinated in 2006.

*Ferdinand O. Zuasola, Inquirer Mindanao*

### 'Mamang Pulis' program pushed

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—Remember "Mamang Pulis (Mr. Policeman)"?

For Director General Avelino Razon Jr., Philippine National Police chief, bringing back the good old days of the Mamang Pulis will arrest the skid in the public's trust and confidence in the police.

Saying today's policemen are more feared than admired, Razon said it is high time for them to relive their glory days as public servants who are dedicated to serve and protect the people.

"Let's go back to the basics," he said. "We should have policemen who are God-fearing, humane, presentable, approachable and dependable." *Delmar Carillo, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

## MILF says it got more territory in talks

CAMP DARAPANAN, SHARIFF KABUNSUAN—The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) yesterday said it was expecting to sign a memorandum of agreement on territory with the government in December.

The issue was the biggest stumbling block to the signing of a peace agreement between the government and the Moro rebels, and had caused a deadlock in the talks.

### Breakthrough

But last week, Secretary Jesus Dureza, presidential assistant on the peace process, announced that the deadlock had been broken.

But Dureza declined to

elaborate.

"We expect the signing of the memorandum of agreement on ancestral domain by December this year," Mohagher Iqbal, MILF chief negotiator, told reporters here yesterday.

Iqbal said the government had agreed to include more villages in the Bangsamoro Juridical Entity, the future Moro territory.

### Problem hurdled

With the government agreeing to the MILF proposal for the inclusion of more villages into the territory, many of the problems bounding the peace talks had already been resolved, he said.

"Seventy percent of our demand in the territorial aspect of the ancestral domain was granted by the government," Iqbal said.

But he declined to state what was actually agreed upon or how large the proposed Moro territory would be.

### Confidential

"It is confidential. What's important now is that the negotiations are moving forward and we will just tackle some remaining issues," Iqbal said.

He said the remaining "30 percent of unresolved issues" would be tackled when the exploratory talks re-

sumes on Nov. 14-17 in Kuala Lumpur.

"Right now, we still do not know when we will sign the peace agreement or what we call the political settlement. However, we and the government are still working on it," Iqbal said.

Eid Kabalu, MILF civil-military affairs chief, told reporters in a separate briefing that even with the signing of a final peace agreement, the Moro group will not lay down its firearms.

"We will create our own security force within the proposed homeland," Kabalu said. *Jeffrey Maitem, Inquirer Mindanao*



FLIPINO soldiers screen residents as they enter a school where US Marines and their Philippine counterparts are conducting a medical mission on the last day of the joint military exercise dubbed "Balikatan," or "shouldering the load together," in North Cotabato last March.

AP

## RP, US army execs declare Luzon war games successful

CLARK FREEPORT—PHILIPPINE and American military officials reported success in the Talon Vision '08, saying the military exercise in Luzon had further honed the skills of troops to deal with terror and disasters and undertake humanitarian aid in communities.

"Our activities in the last two weeks were one big success," said Col. Alexander Bote, operations director of the Philippine Air Force's 600th Air Base Wing and exercise co-director, during the closing rites here on Tuesday.

"We have prepared to fight

terrorism and other international callings. We have strengthened our bond and relationship," Bote said.

### Echo

His co-director, Col. Ben Mathews, commanding officer of the United States Marine Aircraft Group 36, called the exercise as "very successful."

Under Talon Vision, he said units under the Rapid Deployment Force of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the III Marine Expeditionary Force (MEU) had flown 460 sorties and 974 flight hours

for defense air combat training, aerial delivery practice and other tactical training flights.

Mathews credited Filipino and American pilots for showing "superior tactical skills" and doing "safe execution."

### Old, modern fleet

Flight maneuvers and jump-offs were done over Clark in Pampanga, Crow Valley in Tarlac, Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija, Subic in Zambales, Sangley Point in Cavite and Laguna.

The PAF's fleet of aircraft flew with the modern aircraft

of the US Marine Corps, it was learned.

But Bote said PAF pilots did not get to fly the American planes.

"We were not allowed to fly their aircraft. What we did was do maneuvers together so our pilots learned to anticipate and react with joint forces," he said.

### Construction

For Bote, one of the best parts of the exercise was the "subject matter exchange" or the sharing by experts.

For Mathews, the "critically important" part of the exercise

was the medical and dental missions done with the Philippine Army's 2nd Infantry Division in Laguna's eight villages. These served more than 10,000 residents.

The joint forces also built outdoor toilets and concrete floors for at least 36 houses, constructed a 1,600-meter farm-to-market road, and repaired six classrooms in Laguna.

### Training

The US military spent \$250,000 (P10,962,500) for the training and civic missions, Mathews said.

"Anytime you do bilateral training, when you learn the techniques and procedures of your ally and then they learn how we do business, it's a win for us," he said.

"Let's just say something critical happens, something dangerous happens... let's say the typhoons return or there was a tsunami or anything like that. Anytime you have an opportunity to train with the partner in this region, it helps not only the US side but the side of the country where we are visiting," Mathews said. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*



# INQUIRER *Southern Luzon*



SAN PABLO Memorial Park in Barangay San Gabriel in San Pablo City, aka "Jollibee."



SAN GABRIEL Memorial Gardens, aka "McDo."

PHOTOS BY ROMULO O. PONTE

## Visiting the dead or fast-food treat

By Romulo Ponte  
San Pablo City

**V**ISITING THE DEAD and dining in a fast-food joint seem to be two sides of a coin on All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day in San Pablo City in Laguna.

For years, residents have been referring to the four cemeteries they go to as "Jollibee," "McDo," "Prosperity" and "We come," which are also names of known food joints in the city.

One of them is the San Pablo Memorial Park (SPMP) in Barangay San Gabriel, a privately owned cemetery that caters to the upper and middle classes.

An overseas Filipino worker who drew national attention when she

was hanged in Singapore, Flor Contemplacion, was laid to rest there. So was Quirino Glorioso, 102, the oldest priest in the country before he died last year.

But to most residents, SPMP is simply "Jollibee," so-called for a hamburger outlet in one corner.

In another corner, of course, is a "McDo," the tag of San Gabriel Memorial Gardens (SGMG). Established six or seven years ago, SGMG derived its moniker from its huge, arch-shaped main gate that reminds one of McDonald's.

Members of the city's Police Special Armed Force, who serve as funeral escort, coined the term "McDo" for SGMG for easy identification, according to Lolet Alivia, a realty agent and Church leader.

They subsequently "lent" the names of two other popular food es-

tablishments—"Prosperity" and "Welcome"—to the San Pablo City Public Cemetery (SPCPC) on Maharlika Highway and M. Leonor Street and Himilayang San Pablito in Barangay Del Remedio, respectively.

Welcome serves the poorer sections of the community.

The naming game, however, does not end here.

Alivia recounts that her husband Rene remembers from childhood that M. Leonor Street, where he used to live, had always been the route of funeral processions from the San Pablo Cathedral to Prosperity, McDo and Jollibee. Sometimes, the processions come three or four times a day, she says.

The neighborhood thus dubbed the passageway "Street of No Return" for the dead would surely never return.

## Justice swift in this judge's sala

By Madonna Virola  
City of Calapan

**T**HIS MAN IN ROBES does not take a leave from court so he can swiftly deliver justice to the cases he handles, according to people who know his work ethics.

He is also known to be strict about punctuality.

"Case postponements are only allowed when there is sickness and death of nearest relatives. If RTC (regional trial court) hearings are held in the mornings, those under me are heard in the afternoon," Judge Manolo Brotonel of Calapan City said.

He "doesn't want unnecessary agony on the parties involved, many of whom are poor," his wife Elvira said.

When Brotonel was appointed city judge in April 2003, he had 878 cases. In September this year, only 53 cases were pending.

For his exemplary performance and accomplishments, Brotonel, 58, was recognized this year as an "Outstanding Municipal Trial Court in Cities (MTCC) Judge" by the Society of Judicial Excellence.

"I feel privileged, considering that there are also about 3,000 city judges in the country, and Calapan is not as famous as the other places," he said during the awarding ceremony on Sept. 19 at the Supreme Court in Manila.

The Judicial Excellence Awards, now on its 16th year, is a yearly nationwide search for outstanding members of the judiciary and court personnel.

The awardees included Judge Manuel Barrios of the Manila RTC, Judge Roger Patricio of the Iloilo City RTC, Judge Maria Filomena Singh of the Metropolitan Trial Court in Quezon City, and Judge Francisco Seville Jr. of MTCC in Cebu City.

### PAO lawyer

"What really helped me in my commitment to promote justice was my experience in being a lawyer for the poor," said Brotonel, who worked for 22 years with the Citizen's Legal Assistance Office, now known as the Public Attorneys' Office (PAO).



CALAPAN City's Judge Manolo Brotonel (right), chosen "Outstanding Municipal Trial Court in Cities Judge" by the Society of Judicial Excellence, is congratulated by Chief Justice Reynato Puno during the awarding ceremony.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

His sympathy for people in the social margins was developed as a PAO lawyer, Elvira said.

Brotonel was first assigned as municipal circuit trial judge to Naujan, Puerto Galera, Baco and San Teodoro towns, and served for two years. In 2003, he assumed his present job after it was left vacant.

People who worked with Brotonel attested to how he would diligently study the cases before him and ensure that his decision would be fair to all parties.

"He really studies his cases," said Lunyning Centron, clerk of court.

The judge uses the Internet and he himself types his decisions in the computer, and keeps these confidential until promulgation day. Court people appreciated how he lobbied and transformed the old, rickety courtroom, where case records were kept on open shelves, into a more efficient, computerized setup.

### Integrity

Brotonel is also known to be fiercely protective of his integrity.

His wife could not forget that instance when she accepted a live chicken and was prepared to cook it after rubbing it with salt.

"He came to me red with anger, telling me that the giver had a case in his court," said Elvira, who was used to accepting gifts in kind from the poor when her husband was then a public lawyer.

Brotonel explained that as a city judge, the setup was different altogether.

"So when a barang tagalog gift was sent to him by another judge, whose wife had a case in his (Brotonel's) court, we responded with a gift of a herbal supplement so we didn't appear somehow indebted," said Elvira.

The judge also does not welcome at home people with cases pending in his court so as to avoid speculations on his impartiality.

He recounted that when he was new as a judge, he had to dismiss a staff member who would peek at a decision he had written earlier and solicit money from the winning party before the judgment is issued.

"This person led people to believe that he could influence my decision," Brotonel said.

### Free lectures

Brotonel gives free lectures on barangay justice to village officials and seminars on "arrest, search and seizure" to local police officers.

"Policemen are happy that their cases are not easily dismissed because they discuss these immediately after the seminar," said Elvira.

People should be vigilant with their rights and courageous to file charges whenever they are harmed, Brotonel said. "I'm only one component of the judiciary and when others don't do their best, I am affected," he said.

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## SC affirms Ibaloi claim to area of Marcos bust

By Vincent Cebreza  
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—THE SUPREME Court has given Ibaloi families in Barangay Taloy Sur in Tuba, Benguet, the go signal to claim the 355-hectare Marcos Park after dismissing the stake of the Philippine Tourism Authority (PTA) over this abandoned golf course and country club.

The decision, which was issued in August but reached the claimants only this week, meant closure to a 30-year legal battle between the government and Ibaloi families over the property, said Rose Labotan, 56, who led the clan's fight to reclaim the property.

### Dictates

The high court's first division dismissed on Aug. 22 the PTA's attempt to overturn a lower-court ruling in 2001 that said tourism officials forced the Ibaloi families to sell their land to supporters of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos.

The PTA had submitted a petition for certiorari early this year, objecting to the decision rendered by the late Judge Nelsonida Ulat-Marrero, and its affirmation by the Court of Appeals in November 2006.

In dismissing the petition, the Supreme Court said the agency used it as its only available recourse following a "lost" appeal.

The families now living in the property are raising money for a *cañao* (ritual feast) in honor of the Supreme Court justices, as well as lawyers, activists and church workers who fought alongside them, Labotan said.

### Investment offers

The Marcos Park, which hosts the remains of the late strong man's concrete bust, has attracted investment proposals.

An artist once tried to offer the park to investors as a Hollywood studio lot for American productions that require Asian settings, Labotan said.

"We will have to find a way to discourage these proposals. We simply want to convert the property into ventures that the community needs," she said. "We need a hospital. The six-hectare compound where the clubhouse stands can be used for that. We need schools, so the clubhouse can also serve as a school."

The community has already converted three Marcos Park hotels into the Tuba National High School, she said.

### Custodian

Labotan has custody over the area where the bust and clubhouse stand because Samuel Kinomis entrusted the property to her before he died last year.

Kinomis and his five siblings were sued by the PTA when they reclaimed the park at the end of the 1986 "people power" revolt.

"We felt bad. The PTA was already managed by an appointee of [former President] Corazon Aquino by that time, but he told us and friends from the Cordillera Peoples Alliance that unlettered indigenous Filipinos could not hope to win a legal case like this," Labotan said.

"This was strange to us because these were people who ousted Marcos for his misdeeds, and expropriating our lands was a misdeed. Yet, here come the same people trying to keep Marcos' spoils," she said.

# 2 Laguna towns yield shabu factories

By Marlon Ramos  
Inquirer Southern Luzon

STA. CRUZ, LAGUNA—SEVEN people, including four foreigners, were arrested by antinarcotics agents who simultaneously raided two houses believed to be shabu laboratories in Barangay Pagsawitan here and in nearby Pagsanjan town on Tuesday.

Nabbed were Filipino-Chinese Bruce Ong, alias Mr. Tan, 35; Bdul Gaffar Bonsalangan, 41; Cosami Patimbang, 41, Singaporean Soon Foo Song, 30; Malaysian Chin Soon Goon, 46; and Chinese nationals Ng Tou Heoung, 54, and Jameson Go Ang, 36.

Rodolfo Caisip, deputy director for operations of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA), said the suspects were members of a big transnational drug syndicate exporting shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride) from the Philippines to neighboring countries in Asia.

"Because of the capacity of their facilities, we believe this group has been exporting illegal drugs outside the Philippines. But we have yet to confirm where they exactly export the illegal drugs," Caisip told the INQUIRER.

PDEA agents, together with members of the Anti Illegal Drugs Special Operations Task Force and the provincial police, swooped down on a dilapidated two-story house inside a 600-



AN ANTINARCOTICS agent stands guard inside one of two shabu laboratories discovered in two Laguna towns.

square-meter compound in Pagsawitan at around 10 a.m.

They found bottles of hydrochloric acid, sodium hydroxide, barium sulfate, sodium acetate and other chemicals used in manufacturing shabu, also known as "poor man's cocaine," a hydrogenator, casseroles and improvised scrubber and exhaust tubes.

All the suspects, except for

Heoung, were busy preparing the chemicals, Director Jefferson Soriano, task force commander, said. "(Heoung) worked as the installer of the equipment used in cooking shabu. He was also the maintainer of the shabu lab in Pagsanjan," said Caisip.

Lawmen also raided a nipa house beside Paradise Resort

along the famous Pagsanjan River in Barangay Pinagsanjan in Pagsanjan. The place was used by the group as drying area for shabu, Soriano said.

"The suspects were too complacent, that's why we were able to place a surveillance camera inside the room where they cook shabu," said Senior Supt. Benjie Magalong, who

headed the raiding team.

Caisip said the suspects and other syndicate members had been under surveillance for almost six months. "This group had been operating in Laguna for quite some time. They have already sold several shipment of (shabu) to their buyers," he said.

An intelligence agent was able to penetrate the group just last month, Magalong said.

Senior Supt. Felipe Rojas Jr., provincial police director, said probers were still trying to find out if the group was behind the operations of other shabu laboratories in Laguna.

Three months ago, police recovered shabu with a street value of at least P2.4 billion from a warehouse in San Pedro town. They had earlier accidentally discovered several boxes of illegal drugs in Bifian, Sta. Cruz and Pila towns.

The house in Pagsawitan was only four kilometers away from Barangay Bagumbayan where police recovered several kilos of shabu from an apartment in February.

Barangay chair Maria Meg Agarao said the registered owner of the house, Joshua Ching, a Filipino-Chinese, was arrested there sometime in 1996 for possession of over a kilo of shabu.

"We were told that he was eventually freed from prison because he was acquitted. Since then, residents have not seen him again. That's why we're really shocked with this raid," Agarao said.

## Grenade blast rocks barangay hall after polls

By Jolene R. Bulambot  
and Jhunnex Napallacan  
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—A GRENADE EXPLOSION rocked the Inayagan barangay hall in Naga City, about 20 km from Cebu City, around 1:45 a.m. Wednesday. No one was hurt.

Naga City police investigator PO3 Isaas Cabueñas said an unidentified man riding a motorcycle might have thrown the grenade, which landed a few yards from the three-story building.

The blast created a small crater and damaged the windows of the barangay hall and the walls of an adjacent bakery.

Cabueñas said that when they interviewed witnesses, some said they heard a motorcycle passing by after the explosion while others said they saw two men riding a motorcycle within the vicinity shortly before the explosion.

Personnel from the explosive and ordnance division of the provincial police confirmed that the blast came from a hand grenade based on the safety lever recovered from the crime scene, Cabueñas said.

Outgoing Inayagan Barangay Captain Narciso Tablete said two men on board a motorcycle were reportedly seen casing the barangay hall at 8 p.m. and 11 p.m. Tuesday.

Tablete, who ran and won as barangay councilor in the Oct. 29 elections, said the motive of the explosion could be political since the rivalry in the barangay was intense.

Senior Supt. Carmelo Valmorica, Cebu provincial police office (CPPO) director, said there was no evidence yet that the grenade blast was connected to the results of the barangay elections.



BAGUIO FOG

Fog floats atop pine trees in Baguio City, a reminder that the holiday season was drawing near and colder days are ahead. The start of the holidays also marks the start of peak tourism season in the summer capital.

## Motorists told to drive safely in Quezon Highway

LUCENA CITY—FREQUENT vehicular accidents along the Maharlika Highway have prompted the Department of Public Works and Highways in Quezon to again appeal to motorists rushing home on All Saints' Day to drive safely.

"Most motorists tend to be lax in their driving as they enjoy the roadside scenery. Some of the drivers even carelessly steer their vehicles as if they are on the racetrack which could turn out to be fatal," said Ronnel Tan, chief of the DPWH-Quezon

### 4th Engineering District

Based on unofficial police reports, a total of 28 persons died and 66 others were injured from January to October in accidents along the highway's stretch from the Quezon-Laguna boundary in Tiaong town to Calauag town.

Most of the victims were aboard motorcycles and tricycles, which were accidentally bumped by much larger vehicles.

Tricycles are not allowed along national highways but most local government officials ignore the

prohibition with the shortage in public utility vehicles.

"We've already put up clear road signs and steel railings along strategic portions of the highway to ensure safe and smooth travel. Motorists should only have to follow them for their own safety," said Tan.

The Atimonan zigzag, popularly known as "Zatlong M," now have newly painted center and edge lines, and steel and concrete railings, he said.

Senior Supt. Hernando Zafra

Jr., Quezon police chief, said policemen and volunteers would be deployed along Maharlika Highway in the province to extend assistance to motorists and vacationers.

The DPWH has reactivated its "Lakbay Alalay" program to assist motorists during the next long weekend. Department personnel and mechanics will be fielded to respond to road emergency situations. Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

# UP journ graduate-turned-reb dies in clash with troops

By Desiree Caluza  
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—FRIENDS KNEW Lilette Ratina Raquel as a serious student.

So when Raquel, 30, a journalism graduate of the University of the Philippines Baguio, joined the New People's Army in March as her way of serving the poor and fighting for their rights, her friends and relatives were hardly surprised.

Raquel was killed in a mid-night encounter between NPA rebels and armed men identified with a pollucian in Baran-

gay Alaoa-Tapayan, Tineg, Abra, on Oct. 26.

She was known by the guerrilla name "Ka Trina" of the Agustin Bernalen Command, a member of the executive committee-secretariat of the NPA's guerrilla front committee and the Communist Party's Abra committee.

### Encounter

In a statement, the NPA unit said Raquel died two days after the encounter from bullet wounds in the body.

"Ka Trina is a model revo-

'Ka Trina is a model revolutionary ... her commitment is so deep ...'

lutionary ... her commitment to the revolutionary struggle is so deep that her capacity for sacrifice is such that she did not take the path of a lucrative and convenient life after graduating from UP," it said.

"Medical problems and physical limitations did not hinder her to live a life as a guerrilla fighter. She abstained from important family occasions so she could attend to important and pressing matters at work."

Raquel was the eldest of four children of teachers from

Aparri, Cagayan.

In a tribute during her wake at the Resurrection Church here on Monday, her family, friends, classmates and teachers from UP Baguio recalled her days as a student activist and youth organizer.

### Movement

Her brother Carlo said she did not inform the family that she was joining the NPA. But he said the family was expecting that she would eventually be a part of the movement.

"We had a feeling that she

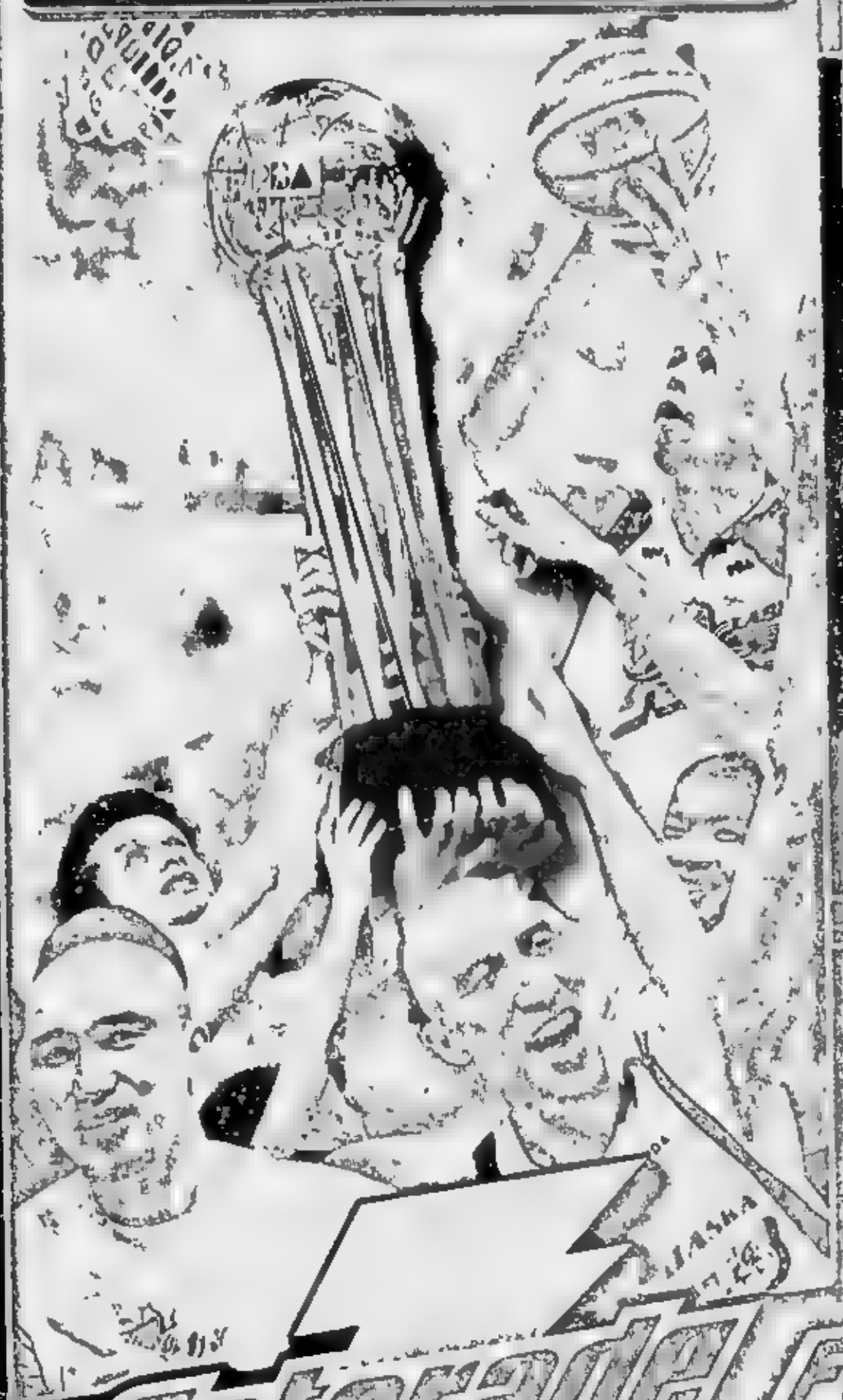
joined [the NPA] because she was always concerned about our security. But she never confirmed it. My parents were always worried about her safety. She would miss family occasions, just like my wedding two weeks ago. But although we would rarely see her, she would always write us and tell us that she loved us," he said.

He said he had prepared himself for whatever may happen to his sister, whom he described as "an achiever and a loving and selfless person."

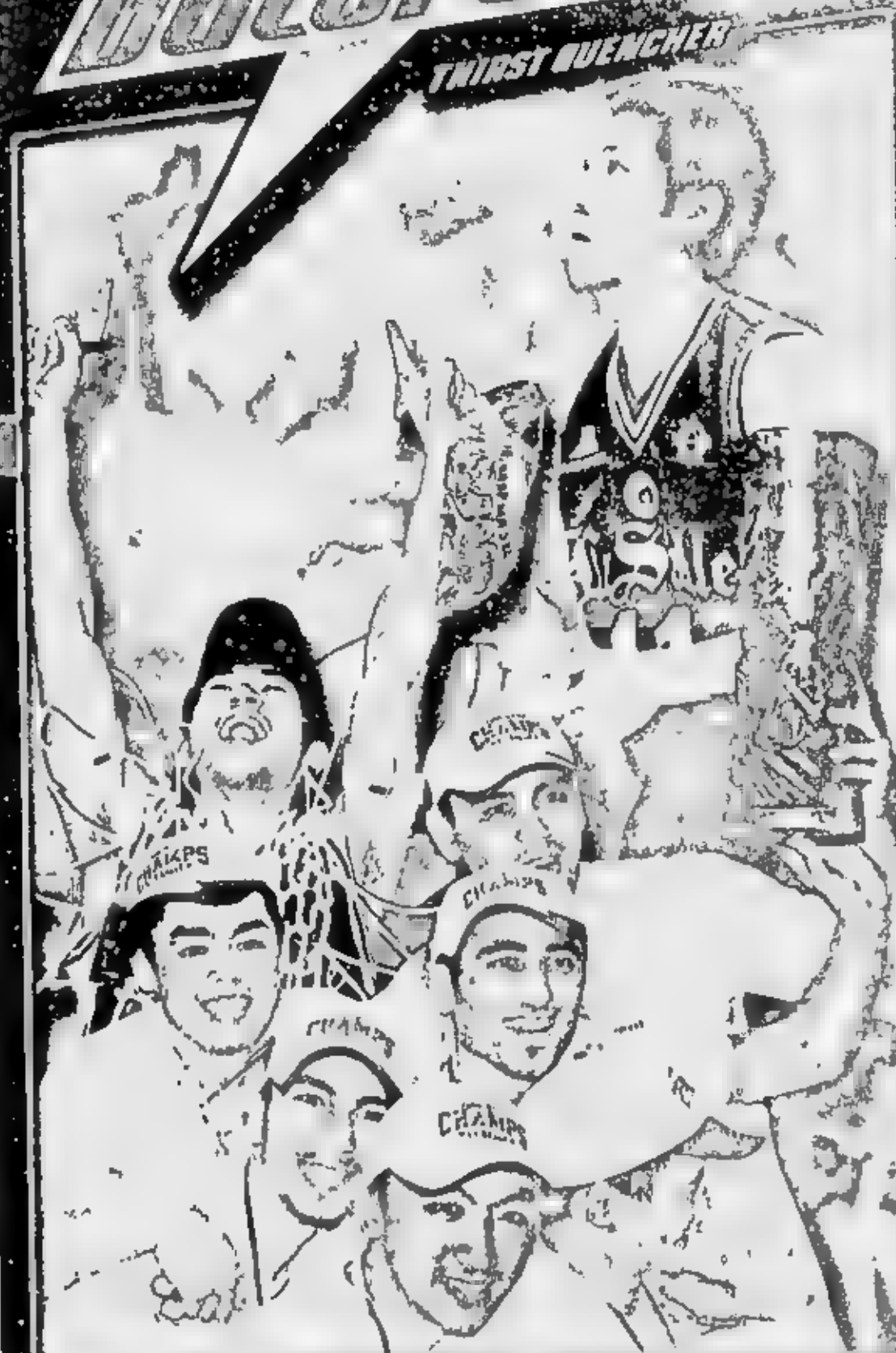


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# Boy killed, 2 hurt in QC junk shop blast

## Explosion could have been caused by rifle grenade that went off

By Jeannette I. Andrade

A 12-YEAR-OLD BOY WAS killed while two junk shop workers were injured when an explosive device suspected to be a rifle grenade accidentally went off yesterday afternoon inside a compound in Quezon City.

## NBI files raps vs alleged smut video providers

By Allison W. Lopez

FOR EDITING AND PROVIDING PORNOGRAPHIC materials to Internet websites, the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) recently charged 13 persons who also reportedly used legitimate "outsourcing" companies in Pasig City as fronts.

NBI-Special Task Force (STF) head agent Arnel Dalumpines said their surveillance operations showed that incorporators and employees of Stratvisions Inc., Mytusany Inc. and Versomina Corp. at Centerpoint building, Garnett Road, Ortigas, "enhanced" smut pictures and videos which would then be transmitted to their clients. The materials, he said, would be posted on the Internet and could be accessed by paying customers.

The suspects, who were charged with violation of Article 201 (obscene publications and exhibitions and indecent shows) of the Revised Penal Code, were identified as: Jose Zarate, Ramon Velasco, Teresa Punzalan, Francis Ademe, Reynaldo Dimia, Avaline Calata, Virgilio Custodio, Jerry Javelosa, Jose Reyes, Ernesto Alano, Alberto Garcia, Jovy Flores and Joel Aquino.

The NBI, however, failed to arrest any of the suspects during the Oct. 10 search operations but seized 10 computer units used in their activities.

On Oct. 24, the NBI invited the incorporators of the companies to an inquiry but a security guard told the agency that they had all resigned.

## Taguig councilor's aide abducted by 4 armed men

By Julie M. Aurelio

POLICE ARE HOT ON THE HEELS OF FOUR armed men who abducted an aide of Taguig City Councilor Marisse Balina Tuesday afternoon in Barangay Bagong Tanyag, Taguig City.

The victim, identified as Henry Bautista, 34, is reportedly a member of Balina's staff and served as campaign manager in the elections last May.

An initial investigation showed that around 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Bautista had just come from his home at Road 1, North Daang Hari in Bagong Tanyag when the four men went up to the victim.

The men said they were looking for a Bogart Bacsd, said Chief Insp. Celso Rodriguez of the criminal investigation division.

With no warning, the suspects beat up Bautista and dragged him to a white L300 van with plate number XGS 950. A check with the Land Transportation Office revealed that the L300 is registered in the name of a Roberto Gerona. The given address was listed as the headquarters of the Navy Intelligence and Security Force in Fort Bonifacio.

Rodriguez added that they have not yet determined the motive of the abduction.

## DID YOU KNOW

AS THERE are over 10,000 named saints in history, there is no definitive "head count" as to exactly how many saints there are, and these saints may be from history, mythology or other Orthodox sources. Canonization, the Catholic Church's current process of naming saints, has only been used since the 10th century. Prior to that, saints were chosen by "public acclaim."

The first and only Filipino saint, San Lorenzo Ruiz, was canonized by Pope John Paul II in 1987.

Kate Pedruso, Inquirer Research

Wendell Camacho, a Grade 4 student of the San Antonio Elementary School, died instantly after he received the full brunt of the explosion. His face and body were badly mangled by the blast.

Ream Enterprises employees Moises Marzan and Anthony Ajento sustained shrapnel wounds in different parts of the body and were brought to the Quezon City General Hospital for treatment.

PO2 Alvin Pineda, Quezon City Police District Station 2 investigator, said the explosion happened at around 1:18 p.m. yesterday at a junk shop owned by Raymundo Obias at 22 Batangas Street in Barangay San Antonio.

Ajento was weighing scraps of paper Camacho had sold to the shop before the explosion occurred. Marzan, on the other hand, had been stacking junk materials prior to the incident.

"All he (Camacho) had with him was paper. I never saw him holding any metallic object," Ajento told the INQUIRER.

Both junk shop employees have been declared stable but need further observation for possible internal injuries.

Violeta Camacho, the victim's mother, said it was the first time her son peddled his scrap to Ream Enterprises.



THE FAMILY of 12-year-old Wendell Camacho wait outside a Quezon City junk shop while police conduct an investigation of the explosion that killed the boy. JOHNSON/DOC

prises. "There are other junk shops here. Why did he have to sell it there (Ream Enterprises)," she told the INQUIRER.

She said Wendell only sold scrap paper to add to his meal allowance.

Pineda told the INQUIRER that the blast could not have been caused by a vintage bomb because the damage was too minimal.

Nor could it have been triggered by a pillbox since the explosion was able

to kill, he added.

Based on a description by a witness, Pineda said, what exploded was probably a rifle grenade. "It was described as a cylindrical in shape, four to five inches long, with a diameter of a sardine can. The boy could have toyed with it, causing it to explode," he said. Pineda added that if a rifle grenade is dropped or is hit in any way, it instantly explodes.

But shop employees could not say whether the explosive had been stored in the shop or if Camacho had brought it in.

The closed compound of the shop, however, showed no signs of extensive damage.

Meanwhile, QCPD spokesperson Supt. Asprinio Cabula said that they recorded junk shop explosions at a frequency of one incident every three months.

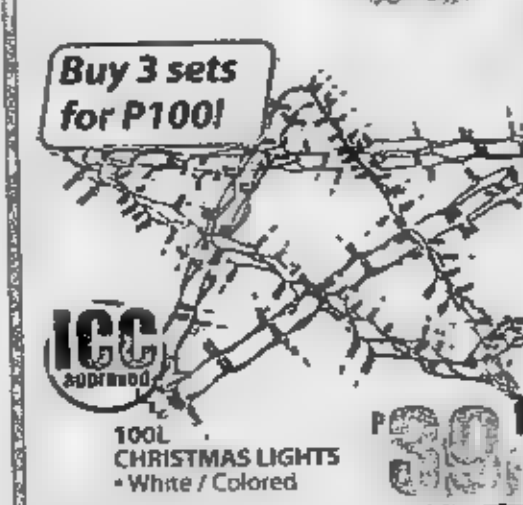
"We are planning to continue an information campaign we devised especially for junk shop owners and conduct visits in their establishments around Quezon City," Cabula said.

According to him, the manager of Ream Enterprises did not attend a seminar held in July for junk shop owners and managers aimed at educating them in detecting and handling suspected volatile materials.

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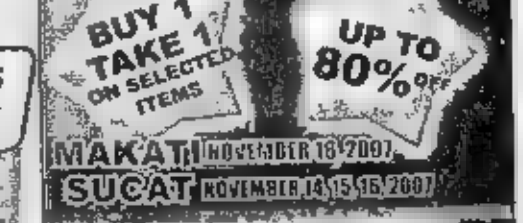
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# Traffic near cemeteries in Metro rerouted today

By Kenneth M. del Rosario,  
Julie M. Aurelio  
and Tina G. Santos

A REROUTING SCHEME WILL be enforced today near and around cemeteries in Metro Manila to ensure the orderly flow of traffic for this year's observance of All Saints' Day.

In Quezon City, the traffic rerouting took effect at 6 a.m. today and will remain in effect until 6 a.m. tomorrow. Towing

zones were also identified.

As early as 4 a.m., traffic enforcers were deployed to cemeteries in the city and nearby areas to strictly implement the traffic rerouting scheme.

Quezon City has four public cemeteries—Bagbag, Novaliches, Baesa, and La Loma; and three private cemeteries—the Eternal Gardens Memorial Park in Balumbato, Himlayang Pilipino in Tandang Sora, and Holy Cross in San

Bartolome, Novaliches.

Those going to Himlayang Pilipino are advised to enter the cemetery through the Himlayan Avenue and exit either through the Philand Drive Subd. or the St. Anthony School Road leading to the Napocor Village.

Vehicles parked along the stretch of Tandang Sora Avenue and Himlayan Avenue leading to the cemetery will be towed away. Vehicles may park near the Park Office of Himlayan, the Emilio Jacinto Shrine or the Pe Isjuio Park.

## No entry

No vehicles will be allowed to enter the Novaliches cemetery. Instead, cars coming from the Gen. Luis must turn right at Doña Isaura and exit through Sarmiento Street to Quirino Highway.

Vehicles going to the northern part of Caloocan and exiting Susano Road can make a left turn at Millionaires Village leading to Green Fields 3, all the way to BF Homes at Bagumbong, Caloocan City.

Vehicles will not be allowed to enter the Parokya ng Pagkabuhay cemetery in Barangay Bagbag. The left side of King Alexis has been designated as parking area for those coming from Kingspoint Street.

Traffic in the area is expected to ease due to the newly constructed circumferential road at the Bagbag cemetery.

Those going to the Manila North Cemetery are advised not to take the stretch along A. Bonifacio Road from C-3 up to Calavite Street since it will be closed to vehicular traffic.

There will be no rerouting of vehicles near the Baesa cemetery. All vehicles will be allowed to enter the Eternal Gardens Memorial Park through the Leyland Drive and exit through Maxima Drive to Quirino.

At the Holy Cross cemetery,



RELATIVES spruce up tombs of their loved ones at Himlayang Bayan in Barangka, Marikina City. JOAN BONDOC

motorists should enter at the back of Green Heights Subd. and exit using the R de la Cruz Street all the way to Quirino Highway.

In Parañaque City, both lanes of Dr. A. Santos Avenue (formerly Sucat Road) will be open to traffic today.

Motorists going to the Manila Memorial Park can pass through El Grande Avenue to avoid traffic jams along the main road. Sucat Road is home to two prominent cemeteries: The Loyola Memorial Park and the Manila Memorial Park.

## Exit points

Private vehicles coming from Bacalaran can make a right turn at El Grande Avenue and on to Aguirre Avenue and exit at President Avenue to enter the MMP.

Motorists coming from the Sucat Interchange can use the west-bound lane of Dr. A. Santos Avenue but are advised to use the outer lane as the inner lane is designated for vehicles entering the MMP or the Loyola Memorial Park.

The traffic unit of the Parañaque City Police yesterday said that its traffic rerouting plan along Sucat Road would be in effect from Oct. 31 until late

evening of Nov. 2, Friday.

The outer portions of the east-bound lane from the corner of Sanchez Avenue to the MMP gate will be set aside for vehicles bound for the MMP, while other motorists can use the inner lane to proceed toward the Sucat Interchange.

Vehicles coming from Las Piñas City through BF Homes can make a right turn upon reaching the Jackelou Ville area along President Avenue, then exit at Ireneville Area and toward Sucat Interchange.

Vehicles going to the Parañaque Catholic Cemetery and Himlayang Palanyag can take Quirino Avenue and then Pelaez Street.

Motorists are advised to turn right at the Ninoy Aquino Avenue, while vehicles coming from the northbound lane of Ninoy Aquino Avenue can turn right to Kabigasnan Road.

Pelaez Street will be open to one way traffic only from Oct. 31 to Nov. 1. Signages will be placed along Sucat Road to inform motorists of the traffic rerouting scheme in place.

The Parañaque City traffic enforcement unit has coordinated with traffic enforcers from the

Metro Manila Development Authority, barangay tanods from Barangays BF Homes, San Isidro, San Antonio and San Dioniso, and other civilian groups for its "Oplan Kaluluwa."

Southern Police District director CSupt. Luizo Ticianan earlier ordered the additional deployment of 200 cops all over southern Metro Manila to secure cemeteries and other major arteries on Nov. 1.

## Peacemakers

In Parañaque City alone, Ticianan designated around 40 policemen to keep the peace in the 114-ha MMP and the LMP.

In Manila, hundreds of people trooped to the sprawling North Cemetery as early as yesterday to visit the graveyards of their departed loved ones to avoid the usually large crowd on All Saints' Day today and All Souls' Day tomorrow.

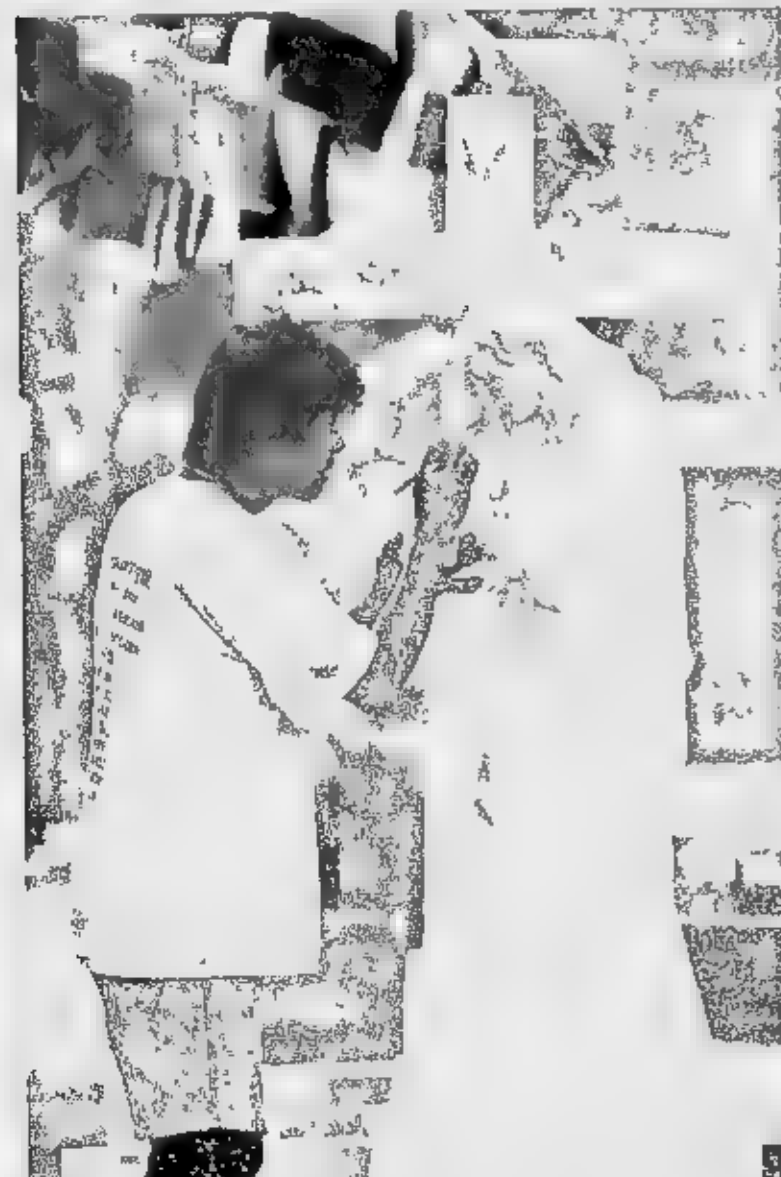
Carrying candles, bouquets of fresh flowers and cleaning materials, a steady stream of people poured into the 54-hectare cemetery along Blumentritt Street the whole day yesterday.

"We want to avoid the big crowd tomorrow that's why we came here today," said Victoria Magno, 45, who came with her husband, Leo, as early as 9 a.m.

While most lighted candles and laid flowers at the freshly scrubbed, newly painted niches of their departed relatives, some were still doing last-minute preparations like scrubbing, sweeping heap of dead leaves and repainting tombs.

The atmosphere at the cemetery was festive because of the presence of makeshift stores of popular food outlets and restaurants and even phone card outlets.

Enterprising Manilans even set up stores at the mausoleums of their dead relatives, selling not only food but also phone cards.



CARETAKER Angelo Amador rushes paint job at the Manila North Cemetery one day before All Saints' Day. RAFFY LEYBA

## Eduardo Ermita was not his real self at presscon

I WATCHED EXECUTIVE SECRETARY Eduardo Ermita Tuesday night during a news conference at Malacañang several hours after his arrival from the US.

From his body language, he looked ill at ease. He was not the Ermita I have known from way back: Cool and collected.

Ermita tried to project an image of coolness, but somehow there was something amiss.

I'm a reporter who covered the military and defense beat many years ago—that was when I met Ermita—and I saw a different Ermita at that news conference.

I asked my sources at the Palace later why Ermita was denying at the news conference there was no rift between him and Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno and why he looked ill at ease.

The same sources told me that Ermita went to the US to cool off after his confrontation with Puno over the shameless distribution of money to congressmen and local officials at the Palace that the executive secretary resented. Ermita suspected Puno of being behind the caper.

"Mon, the President was able to convince the ES (Executive Secretary) to stay on. And being the gentleman and the Batangueño that he is (one who would not turn down a woman), he agreed," one of my sources said.

The President, my sources said, asked Ermita practically on bended knees not to resign because he's one of her administration's saving graces, according to my sources.

I nearly fell off my chair

## ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo



when I heard Ermita deny that he had a misunderstanding with Puno, even saying that he and the interior secretary's friendship went a long time back.

I told myself, "Ah, military men also make good politicians."

I didn't listen to his reason for going to the United States because I know, based on what people close to him told me, the real reason he left in a huff supposedly to attend a UN conference on human rights: He suspected, and rightly so, that

he was sidetracked in the money distribution scandal.

Why would the No. 1 Cabinet member leave the President's side during a crisis, nay, crises: The explosion at Gloria 2, the scandal brought about by the distribution of largesse at Malacañang.

It didn't make any sense at all, did it?

Either which way the results of the investigation into the Gloria 2 explosion goes, whether it was caused by a bomb or an industrial accident, the Ayala Corp. should be held civilly and criminally liable for the loss of lives and injuries.

If the explosion was caused by the mixture of methane gas and diesel, the Makati City government

should also be held liable for civil damages by the victims and relatives of the fatalities.

Some people should be held responsible for that explosion.

Who's this brother of a woman justice at the Court of Appeals who comes to the office in pajamas or in puruntong or basketball shorts?

My sources at the appellate court told me this guy is the woman justice's personal secretary.

Your Honor, please ask your brother to respect your office.

Some friends in the judiciary told me that some judges and justices rejoice when reports reach them that I have a case pending in some courts.

One judge, in whose sala I had a libel case, was so enthusiastic in trying my case he set aside the more important cases in order to try me and my editors.

I had criticized His Honor several years ago for his absenteeism and tardiness, and His Honor has a long memory.

But guys, he was always on time when he heard the libel case against me and my editors.

It's a good thing Mike Arroyo dropped all the libel cases he filed against journalists, including those he filed against me and my editors at the INQUIRER and Bandida.

It's horrible to contemplate what the judge's decision would have been.

## 2 suspects in firm collector's slay nabbed

By Kenneth M. del Rosario

TWO OF THE THREE SUSPECTED robbers who allegedly killed a head collector of a lending company Tuesday in Novaliches, Quezon City, were caught hours after the police conducted follow-up operations.

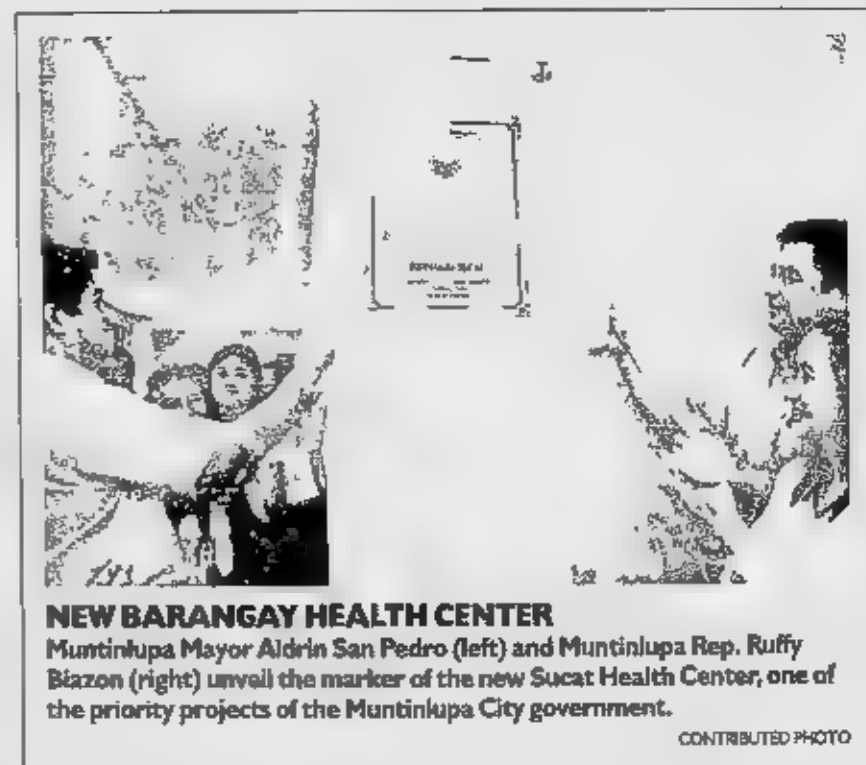
Alexander Laping, 24; and Jerry Mandares, 35, both helpers and residents of Barangay Sta. Lucia, Novaliches, were arrested by police at their houses Tuesday evening at around 9:30 p.m., hours after the allegedly taking part in a robbery and shooting incident.

Agents of Quezon City Police District Station 4 who conducted the follow-up operations immediately turned over the suspects to the QCPD Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit.

Authorities said the suspects refused to talk since they were brought in for investigation.

Rolly Villarba, 25, an employee of C-and-L Lending Corporation, was shot dead the other day by one of three suspected robbers who took an aim at the right side of his jaw, killing him instantly.

Police records showed that while Villarba was driving his motorcycle in front of the Meralco office near



## NEW BARANGAY HEALTH CENTER

Muntinlupa Mayor Aldrin San Pedro (left) and Muntinlupa Rep. Ruffy Blazon (right) unveil the marker of the new Sucat Health Center, one of the priority projects of the Muntinlupa City government.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

the Quirino Highway and Forest Hills Subdivision at around 12 noon on Tuesday when a man approached him and tried to grab the knapsack he was carrying. The other two suspects served as lookout.

The bag reportedly contained P101,779 in cash and a still undetermined amount of money in

checks. According to P03 Rey Anin of QCPD Station 4, the suspects quickly boarded a black motorcycle and headed in the direction of Sauyo Road.

Villarba was brought to the Novaliches Hospital but died on the way.

# METRO

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## The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

## FIRST TIME SINCE CRACKDOWN

## Burmese monks stage protest march

RANGOON—MORE THAN 100 BUDDHIST MONKS MARCHED and chanted in northern Burma (Myanmar) for nearly an hour on Wednesday, in the first public demonstration since the government's deadly crackdown last month on pro-democracy protesters, several monks said.

The monks in Pakokku shouted no slogans, but one monk told the Democratic Voice of Burma, a Norway-based short-wave radio station and website run by dissident journalists, that it was a continuation of the protests last month.

The march clearly was in defiance of the government.

"We walked around the town and chanted ... We are continuing our protest from last month as we have not yet achieved any of the demands we asked for," the monk told the radio station.

"Our demands are for lower commodity prices, national reconciliation and immediate release of (pro-democracy leader) Aung San Suu Kyi and all the political prisoners," said the monk, who was not identified by name.

He said they had little time to organize the march so it was small, but "there will be more organized and bigger protests soon."

Up to 100,000 people took part in

demonstrations in Yangon last month that were crushed when troops fired on protesters Sept. 26-27 in a crackdown that left at least 10 people dead by the government's count, drawing international condemnation. Opposition groups say as many as 200 people may have been killed.

Pakokku, a center for Buddhist learning with more than 80 monasteries about 630 kilometers northwest of Rangoon, was the site of the first march last month by monks as they joined—and then spearheaded—the biggest antigovernment protests in nearly two decades.

The first protests started Aug. 19, when ordinary citizens took to the streets to vent anger after the government hiked fuel prices as much as 500 percent. The rallies gained momentum when the Buddhist monks in Pakokku joined the protests in early September.

Reports that troops had beaten protesting monks in Pakokku on Sept. 6 rallied



monks around the country to join the burgeoning marches.

On Wednesday, the monks started out at Pakokku's Shwegu Pagoda, marching for nearly an hour and chanting Buddhist prayers without incident, and then returned to their respective monasteries, two monks said in telephone interviews. AP

## Children forced to join Army, says rights group

NEW YORK—CHILDREN AS YOUNG AS 10 are being forcibly recruited into the Burmese (Myanmar) Army, bought and sold by military recruiters desperate to swell their ranks, Human Rights Watch said in a report on Wednesday.

The junta, plagued by high desertion rates and a lack of volunteers, is enabling the practice with military recruiters and civilians getting cash and other incentives for each new recruit, the rights group said.

"The government's senior generals tolerate the blatant recruitment of children and fail to punish perpetrators," said Jo Becker, children's rights advocate for Human Rights Watch.

"In this environment, Army recruiters traffic children at will." Recruiters, desperate to meet quotas set by their superiors, target children at train and bus stations, markets and other public places and threaten them if they refuse to join. AFP

## US spending \$43.5 billion for espionage

WASHINGTON—CONGRESS AUTHORIZED spending of \$43.5 billion over the past year to operate spy satellites, remote surveillance stations and CIA outposts overseas, according to a budget figure released on Tuesday by Mike McConnell, the director of national intelligence.

Government officials for years have refused to disclose the intelligence budget, citing risks to national security if America's adversaries learned what it spends on spy services.

But lawmakers, acting on a recommendation by the Sept. 11 commission, pushed a law through Congress this summer requiring that the director of national intelligence reveal the spending authorization figure within 30 days after the close of the fiscal year, Sept. 30.

The number released on Tuesday does not include the billions of dollars that military services spend annually on intelligence operations. The total spying budget for the last fiscal year, including this Pentagon spending, is said to have been in excess of \$50 billion.

The figure McConnell released, known as the National Intelligence Program, covers some of the most expensive spy programs, including the fleet of satellites run by the National Reconnaissance Office. It also includes the budgets for the CIA and the National Security Agency, which is responsible for electronic eavesdropping.

Last year, John D. Negroponte, then the director of national intelligence, revealed another secret of the spy world that was once closely guarded: that the work force in the nation's 16 intelligence agencies numbered nearly 100,000.

The intelligence budget has twice before been made public: In 1997 and 1998, the CIA disclosed that its budget was \$26.6 billion and \$26.7 billion, respectively.

New York Times News Service

## WORLD BRIEFS

## Quake shakes San Francisco Bay area

SAN JOSE—A magnitude-5.6 earthquake shook the San Francisco Bay area, rattling homes and nerves, but there were no immediate reports of serious damage or injuries. The moderate tremor struck shortly after 8 p.m. on Tuesday, about 14.4 kilometers northeast of San Jose, according to the US Geological Survey. Residents reported feeling the quake as far east as Sacramento and as far north as Sonoma. The California Highway Patrol has received no reports of damage or injuries, spokesperson Tom Marshall said. It was the strongest tremor in the Bay Area since 1989, when a magnitude-7.1 quake killed 62 people. AP

## Storm kills 38 in the Caribbean

HAVANA—At least 38 people were killed in floods and landslides triggered by Tropical Storm Noel as it barreled across Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Cuba, in the Caribbean, officials said on Tuesday. After drenching Hispaniola, an island shared by the Dominican Republic and Haiti, Noel late Tuesday moved slowly across the Cuban interior. It left at least 30 people dead and 15 reported missing in the Dominican Republic. In Haiti, an AFP reporter in the capital city Port-au-Prince witnessed four deaths, including a 14-year old girl and her mother who were killed when an uprooted tree crushed their house. Authorities reported another four deaths. AFP

## Major powers to meet on Iran

WASHINGTON—Major powers plan to meet in London this week to discuss new sanctions on Iran amid a spat between Washington and the United Nations over Tehran's nuclear ambitions, US officials said on Tuesday. The officials, who asked not to be named because they were not authorized to discuss the matter in public, said they expected the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany to meet toward the end of the week. Reuters

## Iraq to end security firms' immunity

BAGHDAD—Iraq's cabinet approved a draft law on Tuesday to end foreign security firms' immunity from prosecution by scrapping a controversial decree that Iraqis say amounts to a "license to kill." The bill, which has to be approved by parliament, follows a Sept. 16 shooting incident involving Blackwater in which 17 Iraqis were killed. The US security firm said its guards acted lawfully, but the shooting enraged the Iraqi government. Reuters

## Verdict due on Madrid train blasts

MADRID—A Spanish court will deliver verdicts on Wednesday on 28 people accused of playing a role in the 2004 Madrid train bombings, ending a politically charged trial into Europe's deadliest al-Qaida inspired attack. Ten bombs ripped through four commuter trains early on March 11, 2004, stranding the tracks with bodies. The Islamist bombings killed 191 people and injured 1,800 when mobile phones set off homemade bombs packed in to sports bags. After a four-month break to consider the evidence, Judge Javier Gomez Bermudez will call the court to sit at about 11 a.m. and read a summary of the trial. Reuters



## VOLCANIC ALERT

The Anak Krakatau volcano spews ash and smoke in the Sunda Strait on Oct. 30. Indonesian officials have, since Saturday, placed the Anak Krakatau volcano on an "on-guard" status after increased tremors and smoke plumes were reported. REUTERS

## Court told: Paparazzo offered Diana crash photos

LONDON—A PHOTOGRAPHER RANG A British newspaper from the Paris road tunnel where Princess Diana lay dying to offer exclusive pictures for 300,000 sterling (\$620,000), a court was told on Tuesday.

Two shots of Diana, showing her slumped on the floor of the car's mangled wreckage, were sent to the picture desk of The Sun tabloid by Romuald Rat, one of the paparazzi pursuing her.

Stephane Darmon, Rat's motorcyclist on the night Diana was killed, said the photographer had tried to help at the crash scene on Aug. 31, 1997.

But in robust court exchanges, Darmon's version was contested by Richard Keen, lawyer for chauffeur Henri Paul, who died in the crash along with Diana and her lover Dodi al-Fayed.

"What Mr. Rat was protecting was not the victims of this crash, but the 300,000 pound exclusive that he had just telephoned into the Sun from the tunnel," Keen told the London inquest probing the deaths of Diana and Dodi.

Rat, who was working for the Gamma photo

agency at the time, told Reuters in Paris he had neither contacted the newspaper nor taken pictures of the bodies and said he had evidently been mistaken for someone else.

"I took no photos of the bodies," he said by telephone. "I just took pictures of the scene of the accident, so on my photos you only see the car, the tunnel and the emergency services." Keen accused Rat and Darmon of offering versions of the event that were "self-serving lies" designed to protect them from charges of manslaughter and failing to give assistance to people in distress.

The jury was read excerpts from an interview given to Channel 4 television by Kenneth Lennox, picture editor of The Sun, who said he had received a "shifty panicked" call offering him the exclusive shots.

Lennox said the photos "jumped off the screen at me." One showed Diana slumped in the back of the wrecked Mercedes with a trickle of blood on her face. The second showed a doctor attending Diana with a portable oxygen mask that had smeared the blood across her face. Reuters

## Marx's skin disease may have influenced writings

LONDON—KARL MARX, WHO COMPLAINED of excruciating boils, actually suffered from a chronic skin disease with known psychological effects that may well have influenced his writings, a British expert said on Tuesday.

Sam Shuster, professor of dermatology at the University of East Anglia, believes the revolutionary thinker had hidradenitis suppurativa (HS) in which the apocrine sweat glands—found mainly in the armpits and groin—become blocked and inflamed.

"In addition to reducing his ability to work, which contributed to his depressing poverty, hidradenitis greatly reduced his self-esteem," said Shuster, who published his findings in the British Journal of Dermatology.

"This explains his self-loathing and alienation, a response reflected by the alienation Marx developed in his writings."

While HS is linked to boil-like lumps, the painful condition also causes more widespread infection, swelling, skin thickening and scarring. Reuters

## ONE LAPTOP PER CHILD

A computer developed for the world's poor children, dubbed 'the \$100 laptop,' has reached a milestone: It is now selling for \$200. The One Laptop per Child Foundation, founded by MIT Professor Nicholas Negroponte, has started offering the lime-green-and-white machines in lots of 10,000 or more for \$200 apiece on its Web site.

The laptops are scheduled to go into production next month at a factory in China, behind their original schedule and in quantities that are a fraction of Negroponte's earlier projections.

\* \$100 is the intended future price point  
Sources: <http://laptop.mobi.net>, <http://www.laptop.org>, <http://weblog.eric.ed.gov>



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HOMER Se (left) of Air21 tries to put up an undergoal stab against Red Bull's Mick Pennisi.

ROGER MARGALLO

# Cruz keys Bulls' win

## Miller comes up big as Aces trump Kings

GAMES TOMORROW (Concha Astrodome)  
4:35 p.m.—Welcoat vs Purefoods  
7:20 p.m.—Sta. Lucia Realty vs Red Bull

By June Navarro

IT SEEMS THAT EVERY TIME RED BULL sounds off the call for a hero, somebody steps up to answer it.

After squeezing the best out of Junthy Valenzuela in the previous game, the Bulls watched Celino Cruz fill the holes of their trade-stripped roster to subdue the Air21 Express, 95-84, last night in the Smart-PBA Philippine Cup at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Cruz unloaded 15 of his career-high 20 points in the third period and applied the finishing touches of the win for the Bulls, who have seen Enrico Villanueva, Lordy Tugade and Larry Fonacier shipped to Magnolia (formerly San Miguel).

"Celino really did a good job quarterbacking the team during the crucial stages," said Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao, whose Bulls

moved up to solo third (2-1) behind Purefoods (3-0) and Magnolia (3-1).

Willie Miller tossed in 35 points to lift Alaska to a 103-92 overtime win against Barangay Ginebra in the other game.

Last season's MVP scored seven points during the extension, including a three-pointer that finished off the Kings, who now lost three games in a row for a 1-3 record.

The Aces won their second straight to improve to 2-2.

Mike Cortez canned a three-pointer with 5.6 seconds left in regulation to tie the count at 89 and force the extra period.

The Express were within 83-79 but Valenzuela and Paolo Bugia hit a jumper each and Cruz picked up a steal and soloed his way to the basket to seal the deal.

"They (Express) are the most explosive offensive team so we tried to limit them below 100 points—that's our best chance of winning against them," said Guiao, who came from a one-game suspension after castigating the referees in a game against Barangay Ginebra.

The Bulls lost against the Gin Kings but bounced back by beating the Welcoat Dragons on Valenzuela's 27-point explosion.

Meanwhile, Roger Yap of Purefoods was penalized with a one-game suspension on top of a P20,000 fine after punching Magnolia's LA Tenorio in their match last week.

### The scores:

#### First Game

RED BULL 95—Cruz 20, Bugia 17, Valenzuela 16, Bugia 11, Adriano 10, Sharma 6, Ybanez 4, Robinson 3, Hrabak 4, Najorda 2, Pamiel 1.

AIR21 84—Canalejo 27, Santos 18, Kramer 9, De Ocampo 8, Arboleda 8, Sotto 6, Se 6, Intal 2, Cruz 0, Bakyt 0, Chia 0.

Quarters: 22-20, 37-36, 67-63, 85-84

ALASKA 103—Miller 35, Cortez 14, Carasco 14, Thoss 10, Hugratan 6, Forns 6, Gabatu 5, Dela Cruz 5, Olanahan 4, Capus 2, Bono 2, Laure 0.

GINEBRA 92—Hellerbrand 18, Tuhiti 13, Mamaril 13, Salvacion 13, Macapagal 10, Holper 8, Aquino 5, Reyes 5, Artadi 3, Jao 3.

Quarters: 11-18, 28-30, 50-60, 89-92, 103-92

## Beach volleyball pair boost Olympic bid

By Marc Anthony Reyes

SO FAR SO GOOD.

Heidi Ilustre and Diane Pascua maintained their steady drive toward the Beijing Olympics after barging into the main draw of the FIVB World Tour Thailand Open yesterday in Karon Beach in Phuket.

The Filipino-American beach spikers displayed their readiness to tab a slot to the 2008 Games by trashing a pair of Kazakhs, 21-12, 21-14, to get into the money round of the last event in the 17-leg 2007 FIVB World Tour.

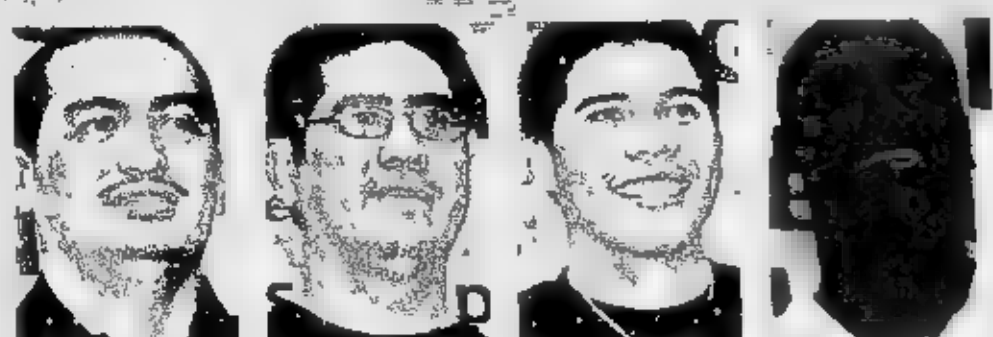
As of last count, the RP duo are already in the top 41 in the world and an impressive finish in the Thailand leg would boost their stock in the provisional Olympic list, which will only accommodate 24 pairs worldwide.

They will see action today against seeded opponents. Though the draw has yet to be released, what could be waiting for Ilustre and Pascua are heavily favored teams from the United States, China and Brazil.

The US has two teams in the \$200,000-tournament, including reigning Olympic champions Misty May-Treanor and Kerr Walsh, who are also assured of the top spot in the provisional Olympic list.

Also crowding the top of the main draw are China's Jia Tian and Jie Wang and Brazil's Juhana Felsberta Silva and Larissa Franca. Ilustre and Pascua steered the Philippines to bronze-medal finishes in the 2005 Southeast Asian Games and the 2006 Doha Asian Games.

They are also expected to banner the beach volleyball teams in the Thailand SEAG on Dec. 6-16, along with homegrown Michelle Carolino and Michelle Laborte, Mowrey Chad, Parley Tupaz, Christian Tuyay and Rhovyl Verayo.



WINNERS ALL: (From left) Franz Pumaren, Louie Alas, Jerry Cruz and Sam Elowe. JUDY ESPERAS

## Best of UAAP, NCAA honored

By Jasmine W. Payo

COACH FRANZ PUMAREN OF UAAP champion La Salle was in the mood for a few laughs after receiving the coach of the year award during the 2007 Anta Collegiate Basketball Awards Night recently at the Manila Pavilion.

"Thank you to Malacañang for this package," said Pumaren—alluding to the political controversy on bribe money in paper bags—after receiving a gift package that came with the recognition.

The awards night was jointly put together by the UAAP and NCAA press corps to honor the top performers of both varsity leagues. And when it was his turn to pass off the honor bestowed on him, Pumaren took on a less humorous tone.

"But seriously, I wouldn't be here without my players, coaching staff, the management and the La Salle community."

And neither would he have been feted if not for what he accomplished: Steering La Salle from the depths of suspension into collegiate glory, piercing through the heart of the steam-rolling University of the East on the way to the UAAP title.

It was a painful defeat for the elimination-sweeping Warriors, but the awards night provided a balm of sorts for some of its staunchest officials.

"The award somehow soothes my broken heart that has been hit by an arrow," UE executive vice president and team manager Carmelita Mateo said after accepting the

UAAP Executive of the Year award.

Archers playmaker TY Tang was named Super Senior, sweet-shooting JV Cassio hailed as San Miguel Scoring Champion, Cholo Villanueva as Mr. Clutch and Roco Maerhofer as Energy Player.

Back-to-back champion San Beda led the best athletes in the NCAA with Yousif Aljamal named to the Anta Collegiate Mythical Team, Ogie Menor as the San Miguel Scoring Champion and 6-foot-8 Sam Elowe as the San Miguel Defensive Player of the Year.

Louie Alas of runner-up Letran picked up the NCAA Coach of the Year award, while UAAP Most Valuable Player Jerry Cruz of UST, NCAA MVP Kevin dela Peña of Mapua, UE's Mark Borborcan and Ateneo's Chris Tiu completed the Mythical Team.

UAAP secretary-treasure Felicitas Francisco also received a tribute for her contribution to UST's reputable sports program.

Honored with posthumous citations were former UE assistant coach Gido Babilonia and former Abante Torote reporter Ace Pasco.

Other awardees: JF's Paul Lee and Letran's Roy Guevarra (Sixth Man), Ateneo's Ford Aran and Letran's Bryan Faundo (Most Improved), Far Eastern's JR Cawaling and Mapua's Jonathan Banal (Rookie), Letran's RJ Jazul (Mr. Clutch), JRU's Marvin Hayes (Energy), Ateneo's Monoy Bacdao (Defensive), UE's Jori Carizares and St. Benilde's Kris Robles (Sportsmanship), JRU's Vincent Pabeta (Executive), La Salle's Hero Yu and Terry Capistrano and San Beda's Mike Advani (Team Managers of the Year), La Salle Zobel's Joshua Webb and San Sebastian's Ryan Buenafe (Juniors MVP) and Ateneo's Kiefer Ravens (Juniors Rookie).

## 'Superman' books World Pool tourney slot

ROBERTO GOMEZ BECAME THE second Filipino in two days to qualify in World Pool Championship after beating Lee Kun-fang of Taiwan, 9-5, and topping the Qualifier 7 Tuesday at the Star Paper Billiards Hall in Quezon City.

The robust cue artist from Zamboanga City was also among the

first to advance from the qualifying rounds last year, but late-round collapses during the main draw doomed his chances.

Dubbed "Superman" for his well-built figure, the 29-year-old Gomez will be making his second straight appearance in the 128-man main event. He joins Group

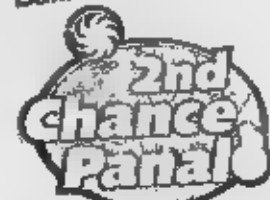
16 and will meet the top seed, Niels Feijen of Holland on Nov. 6 in the event that will be aired on ESPN Star Sports and ABS-CBN 2.

Leonardo "Dodong" Andam made the main draw Tuesday.

The country already has a 15 Filipino stars in the main draw of the event that starts Nov. 3 at the

Araneta Coliseum: Efen "Bata" Reyes, Francisco "Djingo" Bustamante, Alex Pagulayan, Renato Alcano, Lee Vann Cortez, Dennis Orcoilo, Marlon Manalo, Antonio Liming, Ramil Gallego, Rodolfo Luat, Joven Bustamante, Jeffrey de Luna and Antonio Gabica. Marlon Bernardino, contributor

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P100,000.00 Winners		
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Unattended		YSC18DMDV
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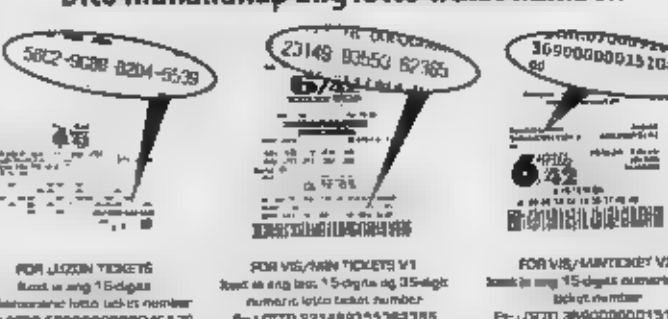
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  - C. Save the confirmation message, reference number, and lotto ticket.
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# Day of reckoning arrives

## Three RP pugs have Olympics within their sights

By Dennis U. Eroa  
Inquirer Libre

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS—IT'S BEIJING or bust for light flyweight Harry Tanamor, flyweight Violito Payla and lightweight Genebert Basadre as they face separate rivals in the International Amateur Boxing Association (AIBA) World Boxing Championships at the University of Illinois-Chicago Pavilion Wednesday here.

Payla, Tanamor and Basadre, who punched with authority to reach the round of 16, need to hurdle their foes to formally book a slot to the Beijing Olympics.

Quarterfinalists in all weight categories during these championships automatically qualify for the Games next year.

The trio practiced twice with their teammates from the RP-PLDT-Smart boxing team Tuesday at the UIC Physical Education building and declared they are primed up for the big Wednesday showdown.

"It's showtime," said Payla, who will go up against hometown favorite and fellow Athens Olympian Rau'shee Warren.

Payla, reigning Asian Games titlist, believes that he must jump the gun on Warren and force the American from Cincinnati, Ohio to play catch-up.

"Getting ahead early is a big plus," Payla said.

Tanamor, looking to match Romeo Brint's three Olympic appearances, tackles Serali Dostiev of Tajikistan,



Boris Georgiev of Bulgaria (right) and Maitiusunquiong Mai of China trade punches in their light welterweight bout in the World Boxing Championships. Georgiev won, 29-27.

while Basadre collides with dangerous Armenian Hrachik Javakhyan, who derailed the American Express with a shocking 20-16 triumph over Sadam Ali in the round of 32.

"Dostiev can score points in a bundle. But I beat him in the Athens Olympics and I can beat him again," said the 29-

year-old Tanamor, the most senior among the seven-man national team. "I must fight wisely against him because he is hard to pin down."

Save for occasional lapses, Basadre showed deadly form against Ognyan Kolev of Bulgaria, 19-13 and Faraj Al-Matboli of Jordan, 29-7.

Head coach Pat Gaspi paired Basadre with the bigger Willie Lopez during sparring and focused on the proper way of neutralizing the clinch which nearly cost his fight against Al-Matboli last Sunday.

"It will not happen again, sir," said the 23-year-old Basadre.

## RP archers eye slots to Beijing

By Marc Anthony Reyes

NATIONAL ARCHERY ASSOCIATION OF the Philippines secretary general Ligaya Manalang said they will try to field more entries to the final World Qualifying for the Olympics in Bouy, France next June.

However, Manalang is concerned over the funds coming from both the private sector and the Philippine Sports Commission.

The Philippines already has assured itself of a place in the Beijing Games next year through Mark Pinul Javier, who ruled the Asian championships in Beijing last September.

The 21-year-old archer topped the men's recurve besting India's Mangal Singh and Malaysian Khalimizan Wan Abd Aziz.

"It is going to be very tough because all those who failed to make it in other Olympic qualifying will join the France qualifying," Manalang told the Inquirer.

The country last sent an entry in the Olympics through Jasmin Figueroa, who made it to the round of 34 during the Athens Games in 2004.

### UST back-to-back champs

DEFENDING COLLEGE CHAMPION UNIVERSITY OF Santo Tomas made it two in a row in the 20th BEST Center Women's Basketball League (WBL) Sunday by crushing Assumption College, 64-30, at the Xavier School gym. The UST belles led from start to finish as they showed their collegiate dominance in the four-level tournament organized by the Best Center and sponsored by Milo. Last year's high school competitive winner Miriam College beat Angeles, 53-43, as it opened its bid for back-to-back titles. In other prep competitive games, San Beda-Aabang nipped Community of Learners, 41-40 and De La Salle Zobel blasted immaculate Concepcion Academy, 44-20.



BAUTISTA



EALA

## Boom Boom spars with bigger boxers in training

REY "BOOM BOOM" BAUTISTA IS NOT leaving anything to chance in his return to the ring following an unsuccessful bid for the World Boxing Organization (WBO) super bantamweight crown.

The 21-year-old Bohol native has been sparring with heavier guys at the ALA boxing gym in Mandaue City.

Yesterday, he traded leather with junior welterweight Glen Mascampo for four rounds then added two more against super featherweight Leon "Tiger" Maratas.

Bautista is slated to face Mexican southpaw Antonio Meza on Dec. 2 at the Araneta Coliseum where his WBO Intercontinental 122-lb title will be at stake in the 12-round encounter.

"So far, he now has 22 rounds of sparring for this fight," said ALA Gym chief trainer Ed-

ito Villamor yesterday. "He's doing just fine."

In his previous fight last Aug. 11, Bautista was knocked out in the first round by WBO kingpin Daniel Ponce De Leon of Mexico.

The bout was the main event of the Boxing World Cup at the Arco Arena in Sacramento, California.

The "Payback" card will also feature ALA fighters AJ Banal and Michael Domingo against separate foes.

Banal battles a Mexican, Jovanny Soto, for the fourth straight time while reigning RP bantamweight ruler Domingo takes on Anthony Matas of Tanzania.

Third Force Promotions top gun Noli Bala said the card's aim is to add more entertainment value to boxing while at the same time, try to tap the vast potentials of the Filipino fighters.

## La Salle tops varsity golf tourney

LA SALLE TOPPED THE INDIVIDUAL and team events of the kick-off leg of the Philippine Golf Foundation-National Intercollegiate Golf Tournament held recently at the par-72 Splendido Taal Golf and Country Club in Batangas.

Charles Hong had weekend rounds of 72 and 71 that earned him the individual plum. He was also a key factor in La Salle's 22-stroke win over Ateneo 1 in the team play. Hong's 72 was the best first-round score.

Marco Olives carded 74-76, Justin Limjap made 73-75, Mico Yee had 86-74 and Jorge Paez 90-93 as La Salle amassed 439 in the best three-to-count format of the event that featured the best collegiate players of the country.

Don Padila (77-77), Gab Adienza (79-75), Gabe Villareal (82-73) and Bayani Garcia (80-82) accounted for Ateneo's 461 tally as teammates Ayon Sanchez and Riva Garvez Tan could only play a round each.

University of Santo Tomas came

in third and College of St. Benilde wound up fourth.

UST's Migo Ochoa, picking up from where his more seasoned teammate Antonio Asistio left off, tallied the leg's best round of two-under 70 in the second round.

Asistio struggled with rounds of 87 79 and failed to lift UST to a better placing.

PGF Trustee Alex Prieto handed out the prizes to the winners together with event organizer Arsenic Laurel.

## Filter Kings claim top group spot

THE MIGHTY FILTER KINGS tripped CKP 168, 77-73, and clinched the top spot in the Group A eliminations of the MBT Corporate League held over the weekend at the RTU gym in Mandaluyong.

With Wowie Evangelista and Edrick Ferrer scoring huge baskets down the stretch, the Mighty Filter

Kings staved off CKP's late surge for their fourth straight win. They finished the elms with a 4-1 win-loss record.

Mike Mancilla's Nougat Candy ruled Group B by tripping Jas Cellphone, 80-70, in the event organized by Metro Basketball Tournaments.

Actually, Nougat Candy and Rusty

Lopez ended up with similar 4-1 win-loss record but Mancilla's wards grabbed the top spot due to winner-over-the-other rule.

In the quarterfinals, the Mighty Filter Kings will face Group B No. 4 Wang's (3-2) on Nov. 5, while Nougat Candy collides with Group A No. 4 Polymaster (3-2) on Nov. 7.

## RP ladies get needed boost

LOOK WHO'S getting VIP treatment from the mayor of Muntinlupa. Swimming legend Susan Papa, that's who.

Remember how Susan was harassed and tormented

### IN HUDDLE



Beth Celis

for months by the Muntinlupa mayor who did practically everything to drive her out of her wits? She was abducted, intimidated and manhandled by the mayor's operatives to scare her into giving up her fight against the mayor's relative who had put up an illegal machine shop business in Susan's neighborhood. These all happened back in April, remember?

Well, last Tuesday, Susan invited me to join the Fighting Orcas—the new swimming club she is coaching—for a courtesy call on Philippine Amateur Swimming Association vice president Dr. Ramon "Cardie" Roque at the House of Representatives where he is deputy secretary.

From Alabang, the group convoyed to Quezon City escorted by a motorcycled cop which Susan said was provided by new Muntinlupa mayor Aldrin San Pedro, who beat Fresnedi in the last elections.

Now don't you consider that a sudden reversal of fortune?

Dr. Roque said there was no work that day but they opened the Batasan Halls for their special guests—his former swimming age group buddy and her young swimmers who are competing in Taiwan this November.

The doctor—himself a swimming champion—was so nice. He delivered a short inspirational speech to the young athletes, treated them to spaghetti and burgers and toured them around the sprawling Batasan complex.

The swimmers were so inspired they promised to bring home medals from Taiwan.

\*\*\*

Ever since their silver medal finish in the Thailand Seaba last month, the RP ladies basketball team, which will be reinforced by three US-based players, have been drawing second looks from people.

Although our chances for a gold in the Thailand SEA Games have significantly increased with the acquisition of these cagebells, head coach Fritz Gaston said he has mixed emotions over this development.

"Two or three additions will mean the same number of subtractions, I am both happy and sad," Fritz said.

Expected to arrive within the next two weeks are Melissa Sison Jacob, 5'9, a pure Filipina (her last name is pronounced Hacob) who hails from Alaminos, Pangasinan; Pil-Syrian Amira Quintana Issa, 6'2 from Matabum, Leyte, and Rachel Ocampo, 5'2, from the University of California in Sta. Cruz.

Melissa, according to BAP-SBP executive director Pato Gregorio who did research on the trio, can play any position but is at her best at point. She can also shoot.

Amira, on the other hand, is expected to provide the much needed height and heft. And toughness, if I may add.

Everytime Amira visits her home province, she keeps in shape by playing with the boys—the only rose among the thorns. "Nakikipagbalyahan with them," according to Fritz.

Rachel, on the other hand, is a try-out who is paying for her trip.

Even the godfathers—both big and small—have started coming in. Fritz asked permission to thank supporters like Omikase Japanese Restaurant, Ruddy Tan of Burlington, Joey Campos of Petron, Jimmy Alabanza of Eastern Seaboard Insurance, who has insured the team for a maximum of P3 million each, and realtor Robin Tong.

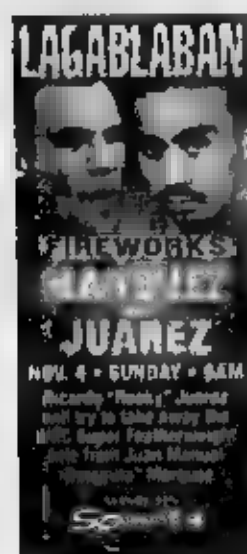
\*\*\*

He must have been severely disappointed over our lackluster performance in the recently-concluded Macau Indoor Games, otherwise he wouldn't have bothered to call just to tell me that.

"We participated in several disciplines but we managed to bring home only two bronze medals, one in chess and one in wushu," said Congressman Butch Pichay who is president of the NCFP and chairman of the FESSAP.

Butch rationalized that competition must be really stiff, considering that this is an Asian event involving world powers in the continent like China.

I should have asked Butch who shouldered the expenses for our participation—the PSC, the individual NSAs or the FESSAP?



## Marcelo's next target: Asian karting tilt

BUOYED BY A TOP 10 FINISH IN ITALY'S ROK World Cup, young ace driver Jean Stefano Marcelo is setting his focus to become Asia's best karter.

The 14-year-old Marcelo is set to leave for Thailand with high hopes of clinching the crucial victory that will beef up his title bid in the Bangkok leg of the 2007 Asian Karting Open Championship (AKOC) set Nov. 1-4.

After clinching the Cebu ROK Open crown and recently the Karter of the Year plum, Stefano can fully concentrate on his mission of clinching the Asian Karting diadem that will complete his goals this season.



AFTER making the World's Top 10 in Italy's ROK World Cup, Jean Stefano Marcelo gets ready for the Asian Karting tilt.

He's actually gunning for his third consecutive triumph after ruling both the Philippine and Indonesian legs that installed him as the solo leader of the prestigious event over Johnny Afonso of Macau and Italian Luka Ferrugan.

And if he wins, Marcelo needs to prevail in the championship leg in Macau this December to capture the crown and preserve the Philippines' domination of the event after Michele Bumgarner's back-to-back crowns in 2004 and 2005, and Marlon Stockinger's title-clinching feat last year.

"We're very optimistic of our chances in Bangkok," said Stefano.



# Safe, sound and southbound.

On the way to the South for a roadtrip? Prepare for a safe, reliable and enjoyable journey all the way to your destination. With a little help from Caltex, the Philippine National Construction Corporation (PNCC) and its partners, going south will now be more secure, convenient and fun for you and your family.

Oil industry leader Caltex and PNCC will travel with you through Ka-Road Trip mo sa Kaligtasan, a project

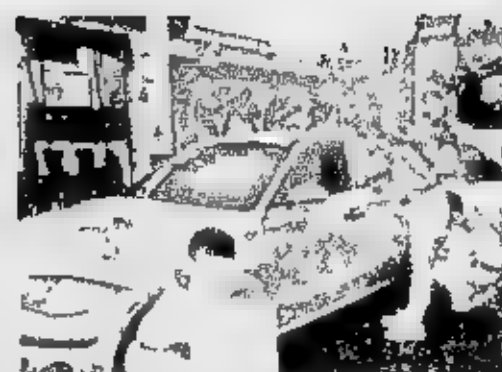


that will provide travelers going through the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) an ideal journey. Intended as a

year-long program, Ka-Road Trip will surely be a traveler's best friend on and off the road as it covers motorist

assistance, public awareness on road safety and a Caltex pitstop activation that will surely be a relief for weary travelers.

As you travel southbound this long holiday period, you will notice that being safe doesn't have to be boring. You can have fun while getting the point that safety is important. You will find highway safety messages along the SLEX route such as "Wala pong finish line sa dulo. Drive Safety."



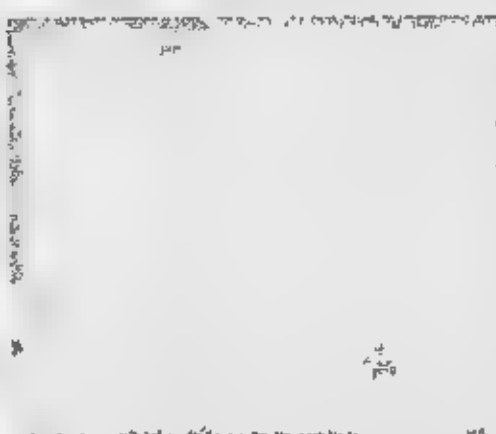
Or how about the line, "Kung gusto magkarera, bumili ka ng kabayol. Drive Safely, kaibigan." PNCC and Caltex, both proponents of safety on and off the road, are looking forward to a trouble-free, accident-free road trip for motorists.

Ka-Road Trip 2007 will kick off with a Pre-Departure campaign on October 21 to 26, focusing on the need to prepare and check the maintenance and safety of vehicles to be used for the road trip ahead. Selected Caltex stations in Metro Manila and nearby provinces will be visibly campaigning and offering their FREE Car Maintenance Check Up. Here's a laundry list of the items that you, as a responsible driver, should check before going on your journey.

## You must check for your car's:

FLUID LEVELS	PARTS FUNCTION
• engine oil	head lights
• coolant reservoir	brake lights
• battery fluid	tail lights
• windshield wiper	• signal lights
• battery water, if available	• hazard-warning lights
• power steering fluid, if available	• back-up lights
	horn
	• tire air pressure
	• spare tire in pressure, you can never be too sure of any incidents
	• road side check, these better be complete and better be working
	• early morning device check

These safety checks can be availed at the following Caltex service stations:



And for the peak travel period, in time for the observance of All Saints' Day from late October to early November, when heavy traffic with the influx of motor vehicles is expected, travelers who intend to hit SLEX on October 31 to November 4 will get a shot at a safe and fun-filled journey through a series of travel time safety checks that will surely help them on the long drive ahead.

## Travel Time Safety Services

Caltex and PNCC will also provide free emergency assistance during peak hours, particularly on October 27 to November 4. The two companies will coordinate with other groups such as the Philippine National Red Cross, Metrowatch and EA Philippines in setting up service booths and kiosks where medical, towing and mechanical assistance will be provided for stranded travelers.



## Recreational Activities

Ka-Road Trip is made even more special by the Caltex Pitstop recreation booths at the SLEX Caltex stations. Caltex will set up vendor kiosks and booths wherein customers can avail of special offers, freebies and prizes from the Star Mart convenience stores. To top it all off, resting motorists will also get to participate in fun games, some of which are related to the Caltex-NBA Caravan promo. And for a limited period, selected toll booth tellers will be giving away coupons that will entitle the motorist to some freebies from the nearby SLEX Caltex stations.

QTV will also be setting up their own 'Bantay Biyahe' booths at the SLEX Caltex stations to monitor the traffic situation and lend assistance to motorists plying the route.

With Caltex, PNCC and your travel plans all set, it's sure to be one stress-free All Saints' Day break. Avail of the free pre-departure services now and get ready to go southbound safe and sound in no time.

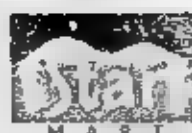
## What Drives You

### Having a safe and secure roadtrip

Buckle up and get ready to enjoy the road trip this coming holiday season. Caltex and the PNCC come together to ensure that you reach your destination safely through their Motorist Assistance Program called "Ka-Road Trip Mo sa Kaligtasan". You can be sure to have your friendly Red Cross volunteers and the EA Philippines' towing assistance service with their reliable mechanics on duty. And if you happen to pass by a Caltex station at SLEX, your favorite Star Mart convenience store is there to give you a hassle-free pitstop for your favorite goodies and, if you're lucky, some freebies!



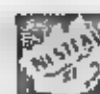
PHILIPPINE NATIONAL CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION



METROWATCH



Coca-Cola



EA Philippines

Havoline

What Drives You

CALTEx



**Sharapova headlines Hong Kong invitational**  
HONG KONG—RUSSIA'S MARIA SHARAPOVA AND AMERICAN Venus Williams will head the bill of top ten female players at January's annual Hong Kong Invitational, organizers said Wednesday. Sharapova, ranked five in the world, and current Wimbledon champion Williams will star at the renamed JB Group Classic here between Jan. 2-5. **AFP**

# SPORTS

## Spurs kick off season on high note; LA loses

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS—THE SAN ANTONIO Spurs had plenty to celebrate Tuesday—past and future—as they launched the 2007-08 National Basketball Association season with a victory.

Tim Duncan scored 24 points and grabbed 13 rebounds as the reigning champion Spurs downed the depleted Portland Trail Blazers 106-97.

France's Tony Parker, the Most Valuable Player of the NBA Finals last June, scored 19 points for the Spurs, who have won four titles in nine seasons.

In addition to celebrating their latest championship in ceremonies before the game, the Spurs had reason to toast the future as Duncan inked a two-year contract extension that will keep him in San Antonio through 2012.

"To have signed this extension and, hopefully, end my career here, that's the biggest part of it," Duncan said of the deal.

Prior to the game, the Spurs raised their 2007 championship banner, and players and team employees received their championship rings from NBA commissioner David Stern.

"The ring ceremony is always a little bit emotional, but it probably keeps you from being at your best as far as focus is concerned,"

Spurs coach Gregg Popovich said.

Argentina's Manu Ginobili was a much-needed fourth-quarter spark for the Spurs, collecting 16 points, eight assists and five steals in the game.

Portland coach Nate McMillan said turnovers were his team's undoing.

"I knew that turnovers would be a big key tonight, and we gave up 17," he said.

### Kobe booed

The other two games on the opening night slate included the Los Angeles Lakers hosting Yao Ming's Houston Rockets.

The Lakers seem a study in contrast with the Spurs, with trade talk swirling around superstar Kobe Bryant—who was booed by fans at the Staples Center.

Even so, the Lakers managed to put a scare into the Rockets, who let a 12-point lead with less than two minutes to play evaporate before escaping with a 95-93 victory.

The embattled Bryant scored 45 points, while Tracy McGrady scored 30 points and Yao added 25 points and 12 rebounds for the Rockets.

Derek Fisher's jump shot tied it, before Shane Battier's three-pointer gave Houston a

95-92 lead.

Bryant then went to the free-throw line. He made one, and purposely missed the second, but couldn't get the rebound to make a play as the Rockets came away with a victory for new coach Rick Adelman.

Bryant finished 13-of-32 from the field and 18-of-27 free throws.

"Kobe missed nine free throws and that's one of the best free throw shooters in the game," Lakers coach Phil Jackson told reporters. "He got tired over time."

"Tonight I thought we played a good five minutes down the stretch after being down a lot of points to bring that match back to a tie. Those things are good. We had 19 turnovers and kept our turnovers down."

"But I told the team I thought they saw the best and the worst of who we are. There were some real nice moments and there were just comedy-of-error moments out there in the third quarter."

In the night's other game, Utah defeated Golden State 117-96 in a rematch of last season's Western Conference semifinals.

**AFP** HOUSTON'S Tracy McGrady takes a shot against LA's Kobe Bryant. **AP**

## Robredo, Haas advance at Paris Masters, keep hopes alive

PARIS—TOMMY ROBREDO AND Tommy Haas were taken to three sets before winning their second-round matches at the Paris Masters on Tuesday and keeping alive their hopes of qualifying for the Masters Cup.

Spain's Robredo saved four break points in the third set before beating France's Gilles Simon, 6-4, 2-6, 6-4,

and Germany's Haas beat Serbia's Janko Tipsarevic, 6-3, 6-7 (5), 6-3.

The last two open spots in the eight-man Masters Cup will be filled this week in Paris, and the chances for eighth-placed Haas and ninth-placed Robredo improved when seventh-placed Fernando Gonzalez of Chile lost.

Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal, Novak Djokovic, Nikolay Davydenko, Andy Roddick and David Ferrer have already qualified for the Shanghai event, which starts on Nov. 11.

Simon missed four chances to break Robredo at 2-1 in the last set then lost his serve decisively in the next game.

"It was a great match," Robredo

said. "Simon is a very good player. He played much better than me in the second set."

Robredo made his Masters Cup debut last year. Haas is trying to get there for the first time.

Haas, who pulled out of the Lyon Grand Prix last week with a stomach problem, was troubled by his right

shoulder and was feeling tired. He said his main priority was to get some rest after a long season.

"It's now been six weeks on the road," Haas said. "I was ill last week. I have had so many injuries. I will try my best here, but I don't want to put pressure on myself. I'm looking forward to the end of the season." **AP**



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- RCBC buys Merchants Savings Bank for P520M/B2
- Business transaction costs in RP reduced, says NCC/B8

# BUSINESS

Editor Raul O. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Corrie S. Narisma

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## Peso still rising, closes at 43.675 to \$1

### Further gains seen with expected US Fed rate cut

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO YESTERDAY RALLIED TO A FRESH seven-year high of 43.675 against the dollar on prospects of another interest rate cut by the US Federal Reserve as well as more overseas remittances and stock market inflows piling up this long weekend.

Currency trading was also bullish across the Asian region ahead of an expected rate cut by the US central bank, in turn expected to make high-yielding assets from emerging markets like the Philippines more attractive to global investors.

The local currency opened at 43.82 to a dollar and gained all throughout this week's last trading day to close near the intra-day high of 43.67. It strengthened by another 17.5

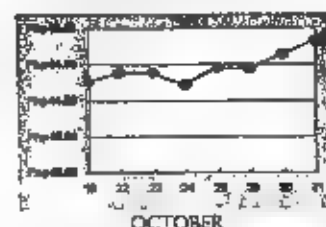
centavos from Tuesday's finish of 43.85 to the US dollar.

It was the strongest level hit by the peso since touching 43.59:\$1 on July 5, 2000.

Volume traded at the Philippine Dealing System was heavier at \$700.3 million from Tuesday's \$666.1 million ahead of another long holiday break.

Philippine markets will be closed today and tomorrow as the nation commemorates Ali

### INDICATORS CURRENCIES



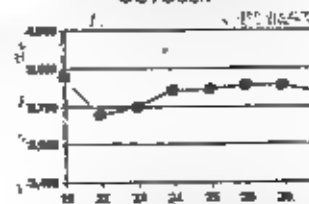
PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 43.675 = \$ 1

As of 5 p.m., Oct. 31, 2007

### STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX OCTOBER



(See stock market report on Page B2)

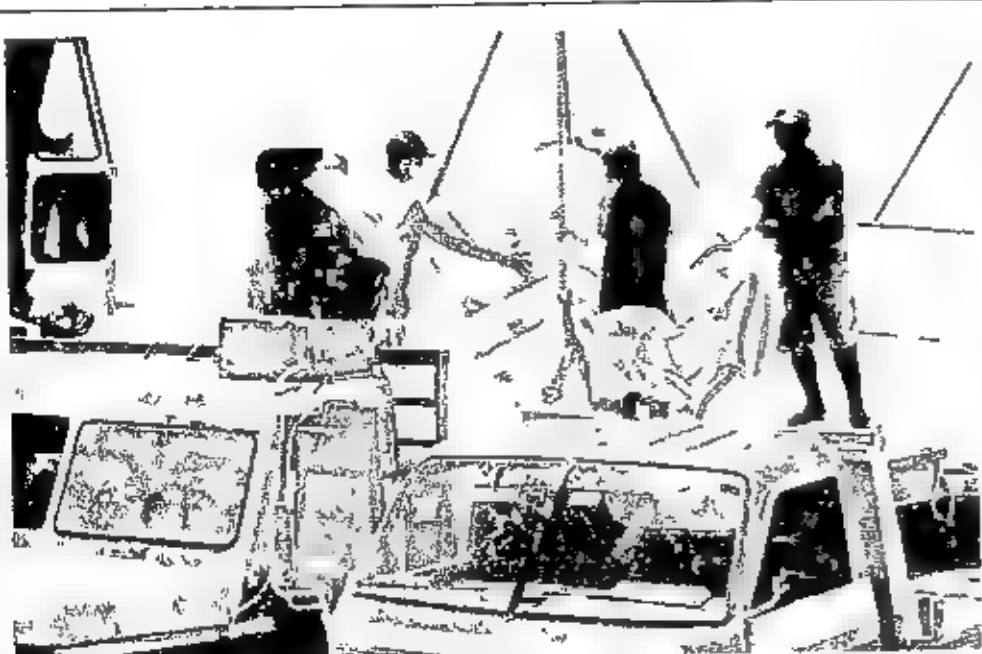
### Shares close lower

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.7 PERCENT lower yesterday amid cautious trading just ahead of the US Federal Reserve's decision on interest rates and a four-day holiday.

The Fed is likely to deliver a quarter-point cut at the conclusion of its two-day meeting Wednesday, but local markets will be closed for public holidays on Thursday and Friday with trading resuming on Monday.

The composite index was down 24.46 points at 3,758.97

SHARES/B2



### RICE INVENTORY IN PROVINCES BEEFED UP

Dockworkers unload rice at the port of Catanduanes as the National Food Authority steps up shipment of the staple to this province in Bicol in preparation for natural calamities that usually hit the area in the last quarter of the year. Catanduanes now has the highest rice inventory in the region with 43,214 bags, enough to meet more than a month's requirement.

## Henry Sy sells stake in San Miguel for P27B

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

SM INVESTMENTS CORP (SMIC), the flagship of mall tycoon Henry Sy, has secured the consent of its board of directors to sell an 11-percent stake in food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp. to the San Miguel Retirement Plan for about P27 billion.

In a statement, SMIC announced that its board approved the sale of

339,349 million class "A" shares at P80 each. The "A" shares closed at P59.50 yesterday at the Philippine Stock Exchange.

The stake represents one board seat in San Miguel, represented by Henry Sy Jr.

SMIC executive vice president and chief finance officer Jose T. Sio said: "We took an excellent opportunity to cash in on one of our investments at a

good price. We still believe San Miguel is a company worth investing in given its strong brand franchise in beer and its dominant position in the food and beverage business."

"However, SM would like to focus on its four core businesses at this time, namely retail merchandising, mall operations, banking and property development," Sio added.

Proceeds of the sale of the San

Miguel shares will be used for general corporate purposes, capital expenditures and other investments.

SMIC vice president Corazon Guidote said SMIC has payments worth P27 billion due to Equitable PCI Bank shareholders for the acquisition of the bank next year. Part of the funding for the payments arising from the acquisition will come from the sale of the San Miguel stake.

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# RCBC buys Merchants Savings Bank for P520M

By Doris C. Dumalaog

THE YUCHENGCO'S RIZAL COMMERCIAL BANKING CORP. is set to buy 30-year-old thrift bank Merchants Savings and Loan Association for P520 million, the bank announced yesterday.

RCBC has entered into an agreement to take over all the assets of the thrift bank from its stockholders—Finman Capital Corp. and the heirs of the late Luis Manapat. The acquisition is part of RCBC's strategy to increase its branch network especially within Metro Manila.

Merchants Bank's eight automated teller machine (ATM) sites will also be part of the deal.

The acquisition was recently approved by RCBC's board of directors, subject to clearance by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas of the terms and conditions of the relevant agreements.

"This is truly a welcome development for all of us in RCBC as our vision for the bank includes growing it both organically and through mergers and acquisitions. The approval keeps us on track of the commitment we made to our public that we shall be closing at least one acquisition on our first year," RCBC president and CEO Lorenzo Tan said in a statement.

Consolidating Merchants Bank's 21 branches with its acquirer's, RCBC

and RCBC Savings will eventually end up increasing their branch network to 317 branches. Meantime, with its additional cash dispensing units, RCBC's ATM network is now close to breaching the 300 mark.

"We intend to accelerate the growth of our ATM network, as we envision it to be a strong channel in reaching out to even more customers. We shall also be using it as a platform to offer our clients new products and services," Tan said.

Merchants Bank, which was established in 1977, has P723 million worth of assets. Seven of its 21 branches are in Metro Manila while the rest are dispersed over Luzon (7), Visayas (4) and Mindanao (3).

## My kind of (boom) town

IN THIS GUESSING GAME OF what can be the next "boom" town, or province, in this country that is playing catch-up with its neighbors, my bet goes to this small province in Mindanao called Sarangani.

"Sarang" what? Okay, the province is part of the grouping known as Soccsargen, made up of South Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani and General Santos City. Yes, the tuna region!

With its seven municipalities, Sarangani is among our 10 poorest provinces. It is nevertheless rich in culture, natural resources and thus investment opportunities. (Read "culture" as "tourism" please.)

In any poor area, as you know, education is always a big deal. The people know that it is their way out of poverty. And wherever people enslave themselves for education, you can be sure of competent labor force. That's the biggest ingredient of economic progress.

Still, in my favorite Sarangani, education is like a religion. Students of the Kiyumad Elementary School in the town of Maasim, for example, walk for three hours everyday to attend classes. The school has only five classrooms for the 250 or so Grade 1 to Grade 6 pupils, and it has only three teachers. At 3,000 feet above sea level, it takes some 10 kilometers of rocky uphill climb to reach the school from the highway. The teachers are never late or absent.

And then you have the agricultural giant Dole Philippines, operating in Mindanao since 1963, to help Sarangani's education program. Dole regularly sends medical missions to the remotest areas of Sarangani, giving out hygiene kits and providing check-up. Result: lower rate of soil-transmitted disease called helminthes (caused by lukeworms) among the schoolchildren.

To me such an interest of the private sector is always a big factor for things to start looking up in any area. Still, Sarangani is also becoming the front door to the BIMPEaga. Let me explain that BIMPE stands for Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines; and Eaga, for East Asian Growth Area. It is part of a program to create trade and investment linkages between one of our regions and those countries. And Sarangani has an area tailor-made for the program.

It is called the JAGS-CT (or Jose Abad Santos Glang-Sarangani Cooperation Triangle), a cluster of southern towns formed in 2003 to support the BIMPE-aga. It serves as the vehicle for trade, tourism and investments between Mindanao and the northern provinces of Indonesia.

The area now serves as the model for Mindanao for municipalities to venture into direct trade with other

### BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III



countries near them. Really, it used to be that their trade was done only with Manila.

Fortunately for the Sarangani area, it got investments in road networks, seaports and a special economic zone. Solely run and financed by the local governments of Jose Abad Santos, Glang and Sarangani, the JAGS-CT already completed a P43-million port in the island municipality of Sarangani (Balut Island), while Glang—which was declared an international port—is about to refurbish an old trading port.

Interconnecting six of the seven towns of Sarangani are well paved, and may I say "well-maintained" too, road networks that stretch 145 kilometers from end to end, passing through the fast growing port area of General Santos City. Traveling from Glang, which is the easternmost part of the province, to the westernmost tip of Maitum takes just a little under two hours even in leisurely driving. No traffic problem whatsoever!

Let me tell you something else. The provincial government, together with Dole, already turned former bandit lairs and communist movement strongholds in Maasim town into money-making pineapple and strawberry plantations.

Listen to Nolding Lanon, a 32-year-old former rebel turned technician: "Years ago I was with some scores of bandits making trouble in villages here." Today Nolding is best performing technician of the Polo Samahang Nasyon Cooperative, servicing independent pineapple growers in the area.

There are already some 2,000 hectares in the towns of Maasim and Malungon, both former strife-torn, that are planted with pineapple through Dole's "growership" program. It is working on a 15,000-hectare expansion project running up to 2015.

That town of Maasim, together with two other towns, is being organized into a growth triangle, where an industrial zone will host a P15-billion, 200-megawatt coal-fired power plant, to be built by the Alsons Group. Under its plan, the power plant will be expanded in increments of 200-300 MW until it reaches a capacity of 900 MW. In short, that's enough power for a "boom" town.

What then explains the expansion

plan for the power plant? Well, I guess it's the investment record of the area. In the last three years, new investments recorded an annual average growth rate of more than 3 percent. The increase in investments in new—again, NEW—businesses reached P497.9 million in those years, for an annual average growth of 30 percent, or much higher than the national average of 0.06 percent.

The provincial government also crafted incentives for investments, such as tax holidays of five years. Moreover, the province wrote the incentives down into a "code," perhaps to cement them well into the future. You know—whoever is in power in the province, the investment code is in force. Something like that.

But just between us girls, here is something different in Sarangani: The local governments are more than willing to provide quick processing of business permits and licenses. It is something rare in Metro Manila, right?

Investment climate is now very excellent, said Sarangani Gov. Miguel Rene Dominguez, who is a 30-year-old bachelor. "We have not had any major insurgency or terrorism-related incident since 2004."

Incidentally, that was the year Dominguez became governor.

Anyway, if you ask bankers, they will tell you that food processing has the biggest potential in the area. More than 7,000 hectares of mango trees dot the province, yielding almost four metric tons last year. Sarangani Bay of course is still an abundant source of seafood. Banana production reached more than 90,000 metric tons last year. The province still leads Central Mindanao in coconut production at 350,000 metric tons last year.

As for tourism, which is considered to be the most promising investment in the country today, Sarangani boasts of white sand beaches in Gumasa town, dive spots in Maasim and Kiamba, and white-water tubing in Maitum. All of those places already attracted investments in new resorts—not to mention foreign tourists. And of course the job applicants.

The Sarangani Bay Festival, which is staged every May, holds the longest open ocean marathon swimming competition in the country and, most probably, in Asia. The contest is a 15-km swim across the Sarangani Bay.

Okay, do I sound like I am rooting for this poor province to make a go at development? You bet I am. The name itself has a special appeal. Sarangani—what an exotic name!

### CURRENCIES

October 31, 2007	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.892569	1.000000	43.9470
Japan	Yen	0.006042	0.008724	0.3834
United Kingdom	Pound	1.432717	2.068700	90.9132
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.899364	0.129032	5.6706
Switzerland	Franc	0.597867	0.863260	37.9377
Canada	Dollar	0.727336	1.050200	46.1531
Singapore	Dollar	0.477601	0.689608	30.3062
Australia	Dollar	0.636982	0.919709	40.4185
Bahrain	Dinar	1.837491	2.653153	116.5981
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.185174	0.267373	11.7502
Brunei	Dollar	0.475960	0.687238	30.2020
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000076	0.000110	0.0048
Thailand	Baht	0.022022	0.031797	1.3974
JAE	Qirham	0.189608	0.272331	11.9681
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.443300	63.4551
Korea	Won	0.000764	0.001103	0.0485
China	Yuan	0.092703	0.133854	5.8825
Denmark	Krone	0.134177	0.193738	8.5142
India	Rupiah	0.017622	0.025445	1.1182
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.207232	0.299222	13.1499
New Zealand	Dollar	0.531193	0.766989	33.7069
Sweden	Krona	0.108775	0.157060	6.9023
Taiwan	New Dollar	0.021375	0.030863	1.3563

Source: Reuters' foreign exchange prices as of 11:00 a.m. Oct. 30, 2007

\* Yen bank in Tokyo as quoted in Reuters' Service

\*\* Asian time closing rate as of Oct. 30, 2007

### PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of October 31, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
17.5	8.4	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	6.8	6.8	6.4	6.4	32,000
73	43	Banco de Oro-EPIC Inc.	82	82.5	82	82.5	1,098,500
73.5	53	Bank of the Philippine Islands	68	68	65.5	65.5	4,976,400
748	536	China Banking Corp.	715	715	710	710	1,030
23.5	18.5	Citystate Savings Bank	23.25	23.25	23.25	23.25	800
0.53	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.43	0.43	360,000
75.5	45.5	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	62	62.5	61.5	62	2,227,000
65.5	34.5	Philippine National Bank	49	49	48.5	48.5	839,400
39.57	17.17	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	27.5	28	27.5	28	1,487,500
90	80.5	Security Bank Corp.	76	76.5	76	76.5	41,400
65	45.99	Union Bank of the Philippines	50	50	50	50	137,400
2.22	0.6	Bankland Inc.	2	2.02	1.98	2	3,405,000
16.25	4.35	CriscoOnline.com Inc.	14.25	14.75	13.75	14.75	1,276,400
0.8	0.6	Philippine Fund Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	4,000
1.6	0.5	First Abaco Financial Holdings Corp.	1.02	1.18	1.02	1.06	890,000
5.9	4.9	I-Rent Inc.	5.2	5.5	5.2	5.5	4,656,000
1,950.00	1,570.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,930.00	1,950.00	1,930.00	1,950.00	1,390
5	2.95	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	3.45	3.5	3.45	3.5	784,000
3.1	1.22	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	1.96	1.96	1.96	1.96	60,000
1,390.00	241	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc.	1,390.00	1,345.00	1,270.00	1,300.00	15,280
2,470.00	1,970.00	Sen Life Financial Inc.	2,400.00	2,470.00	2,400.00	2,470.00	1,760
7.94	1.1	Union Bank of the Philippines	1.52	1.52	1.42	1.52	148,000
6.2	3.8	Abotix Power Corp.	6.4	6.7	5.4	5.7	6,379,000
70.5	48	First Gen Corp.	60	60	59.5	60	1,644,300
62	51	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	66	66.5	66	66	2,170,000
17.5	8.8	Manila Water Co. Inc.	16.75	17	16.75	17	2,492,500
105.46	23.04	Manila Electric Co.	83	83	81.5	82.5	1,700,800
7.8	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	7.6	7.8	7.6	7.8	27,053,000
7	3.9	Petron Corp.	6.9	7	6.7	7	7,395,000
14.78	0.6	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	0.8	0.1	0.8	0.8	85,000
2.3	0.99	Trans-Asia Oil & Energy Dev't Corp.	2.06	2.06	1.92	1.96	10,994,000
6.3	3.2	Ausika Milk Corp.	5.1	5.2	5.1	5.2	26,000
2.95	1.98	Ambacia Tuna International Inc.	1.82	1.84	1.8	1.8	535,000
28.5	18.5	Glenside San Miguel Inc.	27	27	27	27	290,700
51	39	Jollibee Foods Corp.	51	51	51	51	588,600
0.98	0.5	RFM Corp.	0.75	0.75	0.74	0.75	650,000
3.7	2.08	Rorac Holdings	2.75	2.75	2.7	2.7	417,000
80	58	San Miguel Corp. "A"	58.5	58.5	58.5	58.5	40,000
22	58.5	San Miguel Corp. "B"	62	62	61.5	62	508,600
88	19.75	Universal Robina Corp.	14.5	15	14.5	14.75	13,305,100
0.95	0.76	Vatch Corp.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	50,000
6.1	4.64	LC Corp.	5.5	5.7	5.4	5.7	1,000,000
8.2	4.95	Holcim Philippines Inc.	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2	1,820,000
7	2.6	Republic Cement Corp.	4.45	4.45	4.4	4.4	845,000
2	0.48	Republic Cement Corp.	1.14	1.16	1.12	1.14	3,948,000
3.4	2.6	A Soriano Corp.	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.4	152,000
0.17	0.044	AJO and Holdings Inc.	0.12	0.15	0.12	0.15	551,200,000
1.28	0.238	APC Group Inc.	0.71	0.72	0.71	0.72	4,790,000
3.65	1.5	ATN Holdings Inc. "A"	2.85	2.95	2.85	2.9	248,000
0.17	0.075	ATN Holdings Inc. "B"	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	21,000
0.018	0.0075	Atacora Res. & Holdings Inc. "A"	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	6,000,000
9.7	5.8	Atacora Equity Ventures Inc.	7.2	7.4	7.2	7.3	2,710,000
0.021	0.0075	Atacora Gold Resources Corp.	0.016	0.016	0.015	0.016	235,100,000
7.3	3.5	Atacora Global Group Inc.	5.4	5.5	5.2	5.4	17,297,000
1.38	0.54	Atacora Consolidated Resources Inc.	0.81	0.84	0.81	0.83	240,000
1.9	0.83	Asia Agri-Pharmaceutical Holdings Corp.	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	40,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.46	2.45	2.42	2.44	2,985,900
620	397.92	Ayala Corp.	615	620	600	620	385,590
15.25	7.39	Bancarn Consolidated Industries Inc.	14.75	14.75	14	14.5	17,700
5.8	1.42	Benros Holdings Corp.	4.4	4.65	4.35	4.55	3,522,000
12	4.7	DMCI Holdings Inc.	10.75	12	10.75	12	6,334,700
6	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	6.3	6.8	6.3	6.8	25,000
3.95	1.54	House of Investments Inc.	2	2	2	2	6,000
14.5	7.8	J6 Summit Holdings Inc.	11.25	11.25	11.25	11.25	235,000
11.5	1.48	Minerals Industries Corp.	7	7	6.9	7	1,443,000
8.5	2.95	PAL Holdings Inc.	6.3	6.4	6.3	6.4	108,000
0.28	0.016	Pacific Inc. "A"	0.205	0.22	0.205	0.215	75,050,000
0.75	0.185	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.48	0.48	0.47	0.48	1,840,000
2.1	1.2	Republic Glass Holdings Corp.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	55,000
425.5	263.74	S&I Investments Corp.	380	380	375	380	565,550
2.1	1.08	Seamont Resources Corp.	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	77,000
0.73	0.13	Shinoh Corp.	0.42	0.42	0.4	0.41	6,390,000
1.08	0.81	Solid Group Inc.	0.78	0.82	0.78	0.82	480,000
2	0.8	South China Resources Inc.	1.52	1.62	1.5	1.52	858,000
23	1	TGC Steel Corp.	15	15.75	13.25	15.75	41,700
0.75	0.1	Wells Industries Inc.	0.39	0.37	0.35	0.37	3,840,000
1.1	0.26	Zeus Holdings Inc.	0.66	0.68	0.66	0.68	427,000
2.34	1	A Brown Co. Inc.	1.45	1.5	1.4	1.5	705,000
8.9	5	Anchor Land Holdings Inc.	7.5	7.7	7.5	7.7	78,000
19.25	11.88	Ayala Land Inc.	15.5	15.5	15	15	23,748,800
1.88	1	Bafco Corp.	1.34	1.38	1.34	1.36	1,781,000
2.7	1.2	Bayan Development Corp.	2	2	2	2	30,000
0.83	0.24	Dyland Bay Corp.	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	750,000
0.98	0.52	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.77	0.79	0.77	0.79	14,490,000
0.47	0.065	Ever Gotsos Resources & Holdings Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	7,360,000
1.48	0.61	Fit Estate Land Inc.	1.1	1.12	1.1	1.12	8,248,000
2.44	1.36	Fluorocarbide Land Inc.	1.84	1.88	1.82	1.88	19,391,



## US lawmakers want safety chief to resign

WASHINGTON—TOP DEMOCRATIC LAWMAKERS on Tuesday demanded the resignation of the US consumer product safety chief and unveiled plans for stiffer enforcement laws after Halloween toys became the latest tainted made-in-China goods to be recalled.

Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi led her colleagues from the Democratic Party in calling on Nancy Nord, chair of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), to quit amid more discoveries of tainted toys.

"I call on the president of the United States to ask for the resignation," Pelosi told a news conference at Capitol Hill with other lawmakers by her side.

To drive home her message, she displayed a collection of tainted toys and particularly waved a colorful top, whose lead content was found to be 200 times higher than permitted under law.

Also Tuesday, the CPSC came under fire for lack of staff—it has only one full-time toy tester—and capability in examining imported items.

Nord, an appointee of President George W. Bush, has stood firm against proposed legislation seeking to increase the agency's authority and staff, double its budget and increase the maximum penalties for safety violations.

Her stand was largely in line with the broadly deregulatory approach of the Bush administration.

"Any commission chair who ... in the face of the facts that are so clear, says we don't need any more authority or any more resources to do our job, does not understand the gravity of the situation and does not understand the concerns parents have for the safety of their children," Pelosi said.

According to an expert report by liberal advocacy group Campaign for America's Future, "the agency's toy-testing department consists of one man who drops toys on the floor in his office to see if they break."

The CPSC also has only 15 port inspectors, "not enough to protect a continent-sized country" that imports nearly two trillion dollars in goods every year, said the report "Toxic Trade—Globalization and the Safety of the American Consumer."

"The understaffing and the increasing imports create a toxic combination," the report said, calling for an urgent review of laws and inspection methods to protect children from risks.

In a scary run-up to Halloween, the CPSC has recalled a record number of products for lead violations, including buckets to collect candy and costume teeth for children for the fun festival.

The Toy Industry Association claims that 80 percent of the toys Americans buy are Chinese imports and, this year, Chinese imports cost American consumers 40 cents of every dollar they spent on toys.

The value of toys and puzzle parts from China rocketed from 1.2 billion dollars in 1990 to 7.4 billion dollars last year, it said.

The CPSC reported that more than half of products recalled originated from China.

The Democratic-controlled Congress expects to introduce a wide-ranging toy and child product safety legislation "in a matter of a few days," said Bobby Rush, the head of a House panel on commerce, trade and consumer protection.

AFP



A BOY stands next to car models displayed at a toy store in Chengdu, in China's southwestern province of Sichuan. US legislators unveiled plans for stiffer laws to regulate made-in-China toys after Halloween "teeth" buckets and costume teeth became the latest tainted products from the Asian nation to be taken off American store shelves.

## In Asia, oil prices fall below \$90/barrel

SINGAPORE—OIL PRICES ON Wednesday dropped below \$90 a barrel in Asia ahead of the US central bank's impending decision on its key interest rate.

Light, sweet crude for December delivery fell 68 cents to \$89.70 a barrel in Asian electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange by midmorning in Singapore.

The Nymex crude contract fell \$3.15 to settle at \$90.38 a barrel Tuesday, partly due to a research report from influential trading house Goldman Sachs, advising clients to sell oil futures to lock in profits.

"The general expectation is that the Federal Reserve will cut the interest rate, and there may have been some precautionary profit-taking ahead of that," said David Moore, a commodity strategist with the Commonwealth Bank of Australia in Sydney.

Most investors expect the US Federal Reserve to deliver a quarter-

point cut at the end of its two-day meeting later Wednesday. The Fed made a half-point reduction in September.

The market has already factored in a quarter-point cut in the benchmark US interest rate, but a half-point cut could spark a new rally, Koichi Murakami, a broker at Dai-ichi Shohin, told Dow Jones Newswires.

A larger-than-expected cut would further weaken a greenback already at multiple-decade lows against major currencies. Oil futures have been driven to record levels the past week partly because they offer a hedge against a weak dollar.

A weak dollar also makes oil futures seem inexpensive to traders dealing in other currencies.

"Some traders will continue profit-taking sales, but it is difficult to take large positions ahead of the two important indicators,"

Murakami said.

Also, traders are watching for a weekly US petroleum inventory report expected to show that crude supplies had risen last week.

Oil futures' most recent price rally started a week ago, when the EIA reported a large, unexpected decline in crude inventories.

Analysts surveyed by Dow Jones Newswires, on average, predict that oil inventories rose 100,000 barrels during the week ended Oct. 26, though their estimates vary widely.

The analysts said, on average, refinery use grew 0.5 percentage point to 87.6 percent of capacity; gasoline inventories rose 400,000 barrels; and distillates, which include heating oil and diesel fuel, fell 1 million barrels.

Heating oil futures rose 0.07 cent to \$2.4253 a gallon (3.8 liters) while natural gas futures dropped 1.5 cents to \$8.006 per 1,000 cubic feet.

AP

Nasdaq Composite Index ended flat

Also, the dollar extended its decline to fresh lows versus the euro and a basket of major currencies.

"Dealers are showing no hesitation in selling the dollar against the euro as they think the Fed is likely to go for more rate cuts even after the expected one today," said Tsutomu Soma, senior manager of foreign securities at Okasan Securities.

The dollar's trade-weighted index against six major currencies reached a fresh low of 76.704, surpassing the overnight trough of 76.719.

The euro bought about \$1.4440 after reaching a new high near \$1.4450. It also fetched 165.43 yen, near one-and-a-half week high of about 165.90 set overnight.

Reuters

## Volvo offers dynamic deals on S60 T5 and XC70

Easy Ownership Packages available at 48 months-to-pay 0% interest

It's only the start of the holiday season but Volvo thinks ahead and gives aspiring Volvo owners a quick and easy way to own two brand new Volvos. Until 15 November 2007, these two vibrant Volvos will be offered with a monthly installment price of as low as P42,555.25. It's now made easier to own either one of the most covered powerhouses Volvos with the 0% interest Easy Ownership Packages specially designed for people with active lifestyles and discriminate tastes. An Easy Ownership Package of 30% downpayment, 48 months to pay at 0% interest is available for the swift and sexy S60 T5. This supremely comfortable and uncompromisingly safe premium sports sedan cranks out 260 screaming, galloping, and howling HP and a freight train-pulling 350 Nm at a low 1800rpm not to mention a blindingly quick 6.9 secs 0-100 all day any day and a responsible 250kmph electronically limited top speed. Slowing down because of bends and twists in the road is not a worry, what with the S60's Active Bi-Xenon Headlamps guiding you along the way. This is a power-packed fun in a cocoon of safe and innovative piece of metal.

Designed for people who pack a lot into their lives, the XC70 is ready for the most radical situations. Be it the dirt roads or the paved asphalt of the city, its All Wheel drive and instant traction provides instant take off and superior grip. Light pressure turbo 6-cylinder engine puts you to a breathtaking run of up to 210 kph, with its muscular horses churning out a 210 hp at 5000 rpm. The thrill gets even higher as Volvo offers this action-packed vehicle for a rare 40% downpayment, 48 months-to-pay at 0% interest. Easy Ownership Package. Hearst would definitely go a-thumpin' with this very attractive investment package especially with the XC70's High-Fidelity surround sound system that lets you celebrate life inside its comfy shell.

In Manila, Viking Cars, Incorporated is the official distributor of Volvo cars. The Volvo Manila office, showroom and After-sales Service Center are located at 2272 China Road, Asean, Makati City while Volvo Origas Center is located at 88 ADB Avenue, Origas Center, Pasig City. Volvo Cebu is located at A.E. Fortune Street, Banilad, Mandaue City. The 2007 Volvo automobile line includes the ultra-sleek C30 Sports Coupe, compact All-New 940 and V50 Sportswagon, the versatile All-New C70 Coupé-Convertible, sporty S60, the flagship S80 luxury sedan, the rugged XC70 Cross Country and the award-winning XC90 AWD. For details and inquiries, please call 853-6621 to 22 (Makati Showroom) or 837-0414 to 17 (Origas Showroom).

The descriptions and data contained in this press material (release) apply to the international model range of Volvo Car Corporation. Specifications may vary from country to country and change without notice.

For more information, please contact, Lol Concepcion, Corporate Communications Manager 883-6621 local 124. [lol@volvo.ph](mailto:lol@volvo.ph) or [www.volvoph.com](http://www.volvoph.com)

## Asian markets steady ahead of key rate decision

HONG KONG—ASIAN STOCKS were little changed on Wednesday with investors sidelined ahead of the Federal Reserve's decision on US interest rates, due well after regional markets close at 1815 GMT.

The Fed is widely expected to lower its 4.75 percent funds rate, following a 50 basis point-cut in September, to limit the damage from the housing slump and tighter credit conditions.

"Given these economic worries, it'll be disappointing if the Fed does nothing to help," said Masayoshi Yano, senior manager of investment information at Tokai Tokyo Securities.

"So the decision will be watched carefully, along with any comments, which will be scrutinized for clues to future movements."

By 0029 GMT, Tokyo's Nikkei average had eased 0.2 percent, while MSCI's measure of other Asia Pacific stocks edged up 0.1 percent.

The MSCI index hit a record high on Monday and has climbed more than 45 percent this year—triple the gains for MSCI's key world equity index.

Both South Korea's Kospi and Australia's S&P/ASX 200 index were barely changed.

Investors sold some of the region's top exporters, such as Honda Motor and Canon Inc., after data on Tuesday showed US consumer confidence fell to a two-year low.

Resource stocks, including energy firms and the major miners, were also hurt, following a broad selloff in commodity prices led by oil, which slid be-

low \$90 a barrel on Tuesday after snapping a four-day rally to a record high of \$93.80.

Oil and gas producer Woodside Petroleum fell 2.4 percent, mining giant BHP Billiton lost 1.6 percent, Japanese oil developer Inpex Holdings dropped 2.3 percent and South Korea's zinc producer Korea Zinc shed 1.9 percent.

But Japan's biggest drugmaker, Takeda Pharmaceutical, rebounded 1.1 percent, steady from Tuesday's 12-percent plunge sparked by news that US authorities had recommended it stopped some trials of cholesterol-lowering TAK-475, one of its most promising drug candidates.

On Wall Street, the blue chip Dow fell 0.6 percent, while the tech-heavy

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## Chinese seen to park more wealth offshore

The data includes the wealth of millionaires and a larger group of affluent people, though the report said wealth was highly concentrated.

Less than one percent of households hold more than two-thirds of China's personal wealth.

"In the near-term we are certainly estimating that the offshore component is rising for Chinese money," Tan said.

Tan said most relationship managers for China are based in Hong Kong, given the proximity to the mainland.

Ranu Dayal, a Singapore-based partner for the group, said Singapore also plays a role in product development even if relationships are managed in Hong Kong.

China's growing pool of millionaires have been monetizing their assets by listing companies in Hong

Kong and Singapore, creating opportunities for global private banks, such as UBS and Citigroup, to grab clients.

In Singapore, there are over 100 Chinese companies listed on the stock exchange, including firms such as property developer Yanlord Land that has a market value of \$5 billion.

Tan said the millionaires are parking more wealth offshore because of their ability to list companies abroad and move assets, compared to the mass affluent who face tighter regulation.

China would not match the level seen in Taiwan, where 25 percent of wealth is outside the country. But, overall, the net amount would increase as a strong economy boosts underlying wealth, Tan said.

Reuters

AROUND 8 PERCENT OF CHINA'S wealth, estimated at \$2.5 trillion, is parked offshore and the share is rising as the country's economy opens up, boosting business for private banks in Hong Kong and Singapore, consultants said on Wednesday.

The Boston Consulting Group said the Greater China region—comprising China, Hong Kong and Taiwan—is now home to 45 percent of the total \$10.6 trillion of wealth in Asia excluding Japan.

"There is a substantial portion of money that is already sitting offshore," Tjun Tang, a Hong Kong-based partner of the group, told reporters.

The wealth in the Greater China region is forecast to grow to \$8.6 trillion by 2011, the consultancy group said in its Wealth Markets in China report.





Republic of the Philippines  
**NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY**  
Regional Office No. 1  
San Juan, La Union

### NOTICE OF SALE THROUGH PUBLIC BIDDING OF 2,616 BAGS MORE OR LESS PARTIALLY DAMAGED VESSEL SWEEPINGS (FOR REMILLING)

The National Food Authority, Regional Office No. 1, San Juan La Union through its Regional Bids and Awards Committee invites all interested NFA licensed grains businessmen (rice millers/processors) and at the same time wholesaler/retailer in the public bidding of the following stocks:

at the same time wholesale/retailer in the public bidding of the following stocks.						
LOT	LOCATION		VARIETY	QTY (BAGS) MORE OR LESS	KG	MINIMUM BID PRICE/KG
1	Chan Warehouse	Partially Damaged	T7EW72	11	390.68	14.85
	Pankarican, San Juan, La Union	Vessel Sweepings	TNEW72	184	7,638.92	
			VAEW72	178	6,357.64	
			VSEW72	422	15,440.36	
			VCEW72	423	14,442.24	
	SUB-TOTAL			1,218	44,267.84	
2	Rosales Warehouse, Rosales, Pangasinan	Partially Damaged Vessel Sweepings	VCEW71	475	17,433	15.18
			TNEW71	145	4,382.60	
			TDEW71	65	2,392.85	
			TNEW71	80	2,910.40	
			VBEW71	261	10,018.68	
			VCEW72	270	10,107.60	
			VNEW72	102	4,267.76	
	SUB-TOTAL			1,398	51,512.89	
	GRAND TOTAL			2,616	95,780.73	

Bidders can bid on any lot or all lots on "AS-IS-WHERE-IS NO SELECTION BASIS"

The stocks may be inspected at the above locations during regular office hours (8:00 AM - 5:00 PM) on October 31, 2007 and November 5, 2007

Interested bidders are required to submit the following documents:

- One (1) certified photo copy of NFA Certificate of Grains Business License as rice miller and at the same time wholesaler/retailer for 2007
- One (1) certified photo copy of Municipal License/Business or Mayor's Permit for 2007
- Special Power of Attorney for representative, if sole proprietorship/partnership or Board Resolution or Secretary's Certificate, if corporation/cooperative.

Original copies of nos. 1 & 2 should be presented during the pre-bidding conference for authentication.

Bidding documents are available at the Regional Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat upon payment of a non-refundable and non-transferable bidding fee of ONE THOUSAND PESOS (P1,000.00) to the NFA Cashier

Bids should be accompanied by a bid bond in an amount equivalent to 10% of the total amount of bid in the form of Cash, Cashier's or Manager's check payable to the order of NFA issued by a reputable commercial bank. The bid bond of the winning bidder shall be converted to a performance bond upon issuance of the Notice of Award.

Bidding activities shall be conducted at the National Food Authority Regional Office Conference Room, Region 1, San Juan, La Union on the following schedule:

ACTIVITY	DATE	TIME
1. Issuance of Bid Documents and Submission of Requirements	October 31 and November 5, 2007	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
2. Pre-Bid Conference	November 06, 2007	10:00 AM
3. Submission and Opening of Bids	November 06, 2007	2:00 PM

For further details, please contact Assistant Regional Director Atty. Basildes Tacio or Ms. Erlinda E. Baderas or Ms. Eleanor A. Andres at telephone numbers 072-2425907 to 242-5909

THE NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITIES OR DEFECTS FOUND THEREIN AND TO ANNUL THE BIDDING PROCESS, AND REJECT ALL BIDS AT ANY TIME PRIOR TO CONTRACT AWARD WITHOUT THEREBY INCURRING ANY LIABILITY TO THE AFFECTED BIDDER OR BIDDERS AND TO ACCEPT ONLY SUCH BIDS MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE GOVERNMENT

(Sgd.) ATTY. BASILDES TACIO  
Assistant Regional Director  
and Chairman, RBAC

(NFA Nov. 1, 2007)

# Otto Energy buys stake in Galoc field off Palawan

By Rommel W. Domingo

AUSTRALIAN FIRM OTTO ENERGY Ltd. announced it was buying an 18.28-percent indirect stake in the Galoc oil field, from which it expects \$30 million in revenues in 2008.

Company chief executive Alan Parks said in a statement yesterday that the acquisition was made through the purchase of two companies that each hold 15.69 percent of Galoc Production Co.

GPC, the rest of which is owned by Vitol Holdings Ltd., operates the Galoc field off Palawan, which is under Service Contract 14C.

Expected to start production in April 2008, the Galoc oil field has a reserve of 23.4 million barrels of crude oil.

Investors anticipate that the oil field will yield some 18,000 barrels a day, of which Otto has a share of

3,300 barrels.

"The Galoc field acquisition is an excellent strategic fit for Otto's Philippines portfolio and further strengthens the company's vision to becoming a significant oil and gas producer," Parks said.

"With near-term production expected in April 2008, the Galoc oil field will provide cash flow to expedite the progress of Otto's other longer term exploration activities in the region," he added.

Parks said Otto's share of revenues would be used to fund its exploration in the country.

Formerly known as Ortoman Energy, the company has interests in three service contracts with the Philippine government, including a 98-percent stake in the offshore block in Caluit under SC 50.

Otto also has an 80-percent interest in an exploration block under

SC 51 (Cebu and Leyte); and 85 percent in the Palawan Ultra Deep Water blocks under SC 55.

Last July, Otto announced it was raising \$11 million to pursue growth opportunities in the Philippines.

The company had said the amount would allow it "to aggressively pursue" ongoing exploration and development of its Philippine assets, including finalization of its 2D and 3D seismic program for its offshore prospects.

The fund would also cover the cost of interpreting and processing the seismic data, which it plans to farm out late this year.

Further, the amount would allow Otto to meet payment obligations under its bare boat charter for a multi-purpose semi-submersible drilling and production rig for the Philippines as well as those regarding other long-lead items in its list of projects.

## DOF backs plan to give perks to donating firms

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE supports a proposal from the Senate to grant tax incentives to companies donating information technology equipment to education or research institutions.

Sen. Jinggoy Estrada filed Senate Bill No. 324, which seeks to grant perks to companies donating IT equipment, to help improve the IT competence of schools and research institutions, especially those that are government-owned, by soliciting the help of the private sector.

"We (DOF) believe that information technology plays an important role in economic development and nation building. In this sense, we support the proposal to grant tax incentives to encourage private sector donation of IT equipment to education or research institution," the DOF said in a position paper.

The DOF even said that the proposed tax relief under the bill does not require legislation, but only a revenue regulation to be issued by the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

The bill states that a company that has donated IT equipment to a school or research institution may use the incentive of "accelerated depreciation."

Under the incentive, a company may deduct from its taxable income the amount of depreciation of its capital equipment earlier than scheduled.

The DOF said allowing donors to use accelerated depreciation was something the government could afford and would not significantly hurt its fragile fiscal condition.

"Compared with other types of tax incentives, AD (accelerated depreciation) is generally least costly, as the foregone revenue in the early years is at least partially recovered in subsequent years of an asset's life," the DOF said.

"We (DOF) would like to note that the proposal of the bill, per se, can already be implemented given the existing provisions of the Tax Code on accelerated depreciation," the DOF added.

The bill likewise seeks to allow the donor to deduct the full amount of the IT equipment from its taxable income.

The DOF said it was not against the proposal of allowing full deductibility of the amount of IT equipment.

The DOF, however, prefers implementing the current provision of the National Internal Revenue Code (NIRC) to coming up with a new law.

Under the NIRC, a donor is allowed to deduct the full amount of its donation from taxable income, but this only holds true for donations to government agencies.

The donations, the NIRC says, should also be used for priority activities stated under a national plan as determined by the National Economic and Development Authority.

## RP food firms bag \$36M in sales

By Amy R. Remo

PHILIPPINE FOOD FIRMS RAISED over \$36 million from the sale of processed agricultural products during a recent international food fair in Germany.

According to Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap, the total sales posted by local exhibitors in the Anuga 2007 held in Köln Messe was 50 percent higher than the \$24 million in sales generated in the trade show held two years ago.

Yap added that the amount was also 80 percent higher than the Department of Agriculture's target of \$20 million for this year's participation.

Agriculture Undersecretary for Special Concerns Bernadette Romulo-Puyat said best sellers among the Philippine agri-commodities were de-seeded coconuts, dried mangoes, banana chips and canned tuna.

"Fourteen of the Philippines' top food manufacturers represented the country in the event, which was attended by around 163,000 visitors from 175 countries," Puyat said.

Food firms that promoted locally processed fruits include B-G Fruits and Nuts Manufacturing Corp., El Coco Trading Corp., Celebes Coconut Corp., KSK Food Products, Primex Coco Products and See's International Food Manufacturing.

Meanwhile, Oceanic Exports Manila Inc., Pacific Isles International Trading Corp., Philippine Grocers Food Exports Inc. and Florence Foods Corp. promoted sauces, condiments, biscuits and juices.

## Peso ...

From page B1  
Saints Day. Trading will resume Monday next week.

"People are moving ahead because of the expected US Fed cut," Banco de Oro Universal Bank chief strategist Jonathan Ravelas said.

But Ravelas said the peso might pause on its rally and trade sideways next week within a range of 43.50 to 43.90 against the greenback.

He said the next barrier, albeit a minor one, was at 43.50 \$1 while a major dollar support was likely at 43.

"At the stock market, traders were defensive—either squaring off (their position) or selling ahead of the long (weekend)," Ravelas said.

Unlike previous days when the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas was suspected of heavily buying dollars to curb the peso's appreciation, traders said the central bank's hand was hardly felt at the spot foreign exchange market. Philippine Dealing System yesterday



Republic of the Philippines  
**NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY**  
Central Luzon Regional Office  
Cabanatuan City

### INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Procurement of 2008 Trucking Services Requirements of NFA Region III

The National Food Authority, Region III, through its Corporate Operating Funds (COF) intends to apply the sum of One Hundred Sixty Three Million One Hundred Seven Thousand Four Hundred Fifty and 46/100 PESOS only (P163,107,450.46) inclusive of VAT being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payment under the contract for the Supply of Trucking Services for the delivery of imported goods from Subic Port to the different warehouses in the various provinces of Regions III and II and transfer of goods within Region III.

The National Food Authority, Region III now invites Bids from Eligible Bidders for the Supply of Trucking Services with the following specifications:

#### A. DELIVERY FROM SUBIC PORT TO NFA REGION III

Lot #	RECEIVING PROVINCES	RECEIVING WAREHOUSES	Minimum No. of Trucks Required	VOLUME BAGS	APPROVED BUDGET for the CONTRACT
I	ALBURA	Baler/Mia Aurora/Casiguran	4	70,000	P 8,373,152.00
II	BATAAN	Batanga	5	200,000	P 3,536,340.00
III	BULACAN	Malolos/San Miguel/San Ildefonso/Balagtas/Merito	35	1,882,000	P 51,574,162.20
IV	NUOVA ECIA	Cabin City/Gumbala/Alagangapson	25	890,000	P 23,336,966.75
V	PAMPANGA	San Fernando City/Mexico	15	730,000	P 14,280,708.00
VI	TARLAC	Agua/Concepcion/La Paz	10	450,000	P 11,171,510.00
VII	ZAMBALES	Iba/Castillejos	4	150,000	P 2,555,660.00

#### B. LOCAL TRANSFER WITHIN REGION III

Lot #	SOURCE	RECEIVING WAREHOUSE	Minimum No. of Trucks Required	VOLUME BAGS	APPROVED BUDGET for the CONTRACT
VIII	Cabanatuan City	Baler/Mia Aurora/Casiguran	5	20,000	P 1,229,280.00

#### C. DELIVERY FROM SUBIC PORT TO NFA REGION II

Lot #	RECEIVING PROVINCES	RECEIVING WAREHOUSES	Minimum No. of Trucks Required	VOLUME BAGS	APPROVED BUDGET for the CONTRACT
I	ISABELA	Sancti Spiritus/San Mateo/Turkey/Cauayan/NPCC	10	510,000	P 27,058,292.75
II	QUINON	Medalla/Diffun/Cabaroguel	10	510,000	P 4,547,521.75
III	IFUGAO	Poba Via Santiago	10	510,000	P 1,539,522.00
IV	NUOVA	Bayangbong/Bagabag	20	830,000	P 33,145,246.50
V	V. ZAYAY		10	370,000	P 15,922,425.00
		GRAND TOTAL	133	5,342,000	P 163,107,450.46

The prospective bidder may bid in any or all lots upon payment of a non-refundable application/bidding fee and upon submission of a certified photocopy of the following requirements:

- DTI business name registration, CDA Registration and/or SEC Registration certificate, whichever may be appropriate
- Valid and current Mayor's Permit and Official Receipt

Schedule of application/bidding fees are as follows:

LOT NO.	BIDDING FEE	LOT NO.	BIDDING FEE
I	P 3,000.00	VI	P 2,500.00
II	P 2,500.00	VII	P 2,500.00
III	P 5,000.00	IX	P 4,500.00
IV	P 4,500.00	X	P 3,500.00
V	P 3,500.00		
	P 3,500.00		

Issuance of bid documents, pre-bidding conference, bidding proper and other schedule of activities shall be conducted at NFA-CLRO, Cabanatuan City on the following dates:

Particulars	Date
1. Issuance of Application and List of Eligibility Requirements, Bidding Documents	November 5-14, 2007
2. Pre-Bidding Conference	November 16, 2007 (10:00 a.m.)
3. Description of Submission of Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals (Opening of Bids will follow immediately)	November 27, 2007 (10:00 a.m.)

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding (lowest price) using a non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (RA 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organization with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines and to citizens or organizations of a country, the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (RA 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138).

All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the following forms and in accordance with the schedule below:

Forms of Security	Minimum Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract to be bid
1. Cash, Certified Check, Cashier's Check, Manager's Check, Bank Draft or Irrevocable Letter of Credit	One Percent
2. Bank Guarantee	One and a half percent (1 1/2%)
3. Surety Bond (GSSS) callable on Demand and valid up to 120 days	Two and a half percent (2 1/2%)

Eligibility criteria include, among others that the value of the prospective bidder's largest single contract, adjusted to current prices using the wholesale consumer price index, completed within the last three years and similar to the contract to be bid, must be at least fifty percent (50%) of the Approved Budget for the Contract to be bid.

Or in lieu of the above, prospective bidder should have completed at least three similar contracts and the aggregate contract amounts should be equivalent to at least fifty percent (50%) of the ABC for the lots to be bid. Provided, that the largest of these similar contracts must be equivalent to at least twenty five percent (25%) of the ABC of the lots to be bid. Provided further that the business/company of the prospective bidder has been in existence for at least three (3) consecutive years prior to publication of this invitation to Bid.

Interested bidders may obtain further information from the National Food Authority, Region III and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. during regular working days:

Name of Office : National Food Authority  
Name of Officer : Ruben J. Reside, Assistant Regional Manager  
Address : Maharlika Highway, Cabanatuan City  
Tel. No. : 044-600-2539/044-483-1188  
Fax No. : 600-2693

The National Food Authority, Region III reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) RUBEN J. RESIDE  
Asst. Regional Manager

(NFA Nov. 1, 2007)



Republic of the Philippines  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
Center for Health Development - Bicol  
Naga City

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

Naga City

Telephone Nos. (054) 473-89-36 - E-mail Address: bac\_bicolmed@yahoo.com.ph

Fax No. (054) 473-89-36 - Website: http://www.doh.gov.ph/bmc/index.htm

### Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

- The BICOL MEDICAL CENTER, through General Appropriations Act intends to apply specified sum for the following projects:

a) Project: FIXED RATE VARIABLE VOLUME SCHEME FOR HEMATOLOGY AND CLINICAL CHEMISTRY SUPPLIES & REAGENTS (LABORATORY) (AEB No. 2007-26) (GAA 2008)  
Approved Budget for the Contract: PESOS FOURTEEN MILLION TWO HUNDRED FORTY SIX THOUSAND FOUR HUNDRED ONLY (P14,246,400.00)

Sale of Bid Documents: November 12, 2007 - 5:00 P.M. BMC Library  
Pre-Bid Conference: November 20, 2007 - 8:30 to 9:00 A.M. BMC Library  
Submission of Bids: November 20, 2007 - 9:00 A.M. BMC Library  
Opening of Bids: TWO THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED PESOS (P2,000.00)  
Price of Bid Documents: PESOS TWO THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED NINETY-NINE THOUSAND (P2,999,000.00)

b) Project: PROCUREMENT OF VARIOUS MEDICAL GRADE GASES (AEB No. 2007-27) (GAA 2008)  
Approved Budget for the Contract: PESOS TWO MILLION NINE HUNDRED NINETY-NINE THOUSAND (P2,999,000.00)

Sale of Bid Documents: November 12, 2007 - 5:00 P.M. BMC Library  
Pre-Bid Conference: November 20, 2007 - 8:30 to 9:00 A.M. BMC Library  
Submission of Bids: November 20, 2007 - 9:00 A.M. BMC Library  
Opening of Bids: TWO THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED PESOS (P2,000.00)  
Price of Bid Documents: PESOS TWO THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED NINETY-NINE THOUSAND (P2,999,000.00)

Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.

- The BICOL MEDICAL CENTER reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

The description of an eligible bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITR.

- Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted to organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines as specified in Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITR. The bidder with the lowest calculated bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage or to the final determination of responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

- Interested Bidders may obtain further information from BICOL MEDICAL CENTER and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:30 A.M. to 12:00 Noon, 1:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M., except weekends and holidays.

- A complete set of Bidding Documents for each project may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee as stated above. The method of payment will be in the form of Cash. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

- Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address, date and time stated above. The bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any of the following forms, in the amount at least equal to and not less than a percentage of the ABC or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency:

- Cash, certified check, cashier's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit (1% of ABC)
- Bank Guarantee (1.5% of ABC)
- GSSS Surety Bond (2.5% of ABC)

- Low bids shall not be accepted.
- Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representative who choose to attend at the address below.

- The BICOL MEDICAL CENTER reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Contact Address: BICOL MEDICAL CENTER  
Cabanatuan City  
Telephone Nos. (054) 473-8936  
E-mail Address: bac\_bicolmed@yahoo.com.ph  
Fax No. (054) 473-8936  
Website: http://www.doh.gov.ph/bmc/index.htm

Contact Person: JENNY S. ONG, MD, FPOA

(Sgd.) JENNY S. ONG, MD, FPOA  
BAC Chairman

(NFA November 1, 2007)





Republic of the Philippines  
**DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT**  
National Capital Region  
DY Int'l Bldg. 1650 San Marcelino  
cor General Malvar St., Manila, Manila

### NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/Citizenship	Position
<b>MH TECHNICAL SERVICES CORPORATION</b> 25/F BPI Buendia Center Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Kenji Yoshimoto Japanese	Power Plant Division Manager
<b>TOYO CONSTRUCTION CO. LTD.</b> 4/F Princess Bldg., 104 Esteban St., Legaspi Vill., Makati City	Akihiro Nagano Japanese	Deputy Project Manager
<b>LITTLE CHAMP MARKETING CO. LTD.</b> Rm. 404 Fortune Palace, 665 J. Luna St., Binondo, Manila	Qinghuan Lin Chinese	Operations Manager
<b>LITTLE CHAMP MARKETING CO. LTD.</b> Rm. 404 Fortune Palace, 665 J. Luna St., Binondo, Manila	Zhiyong Chen Chinese	Sales Manager
<b>MARIANAS EXPRESS LINE PHILIPPINES, INC.</b> 20/F Salcedo Tower, 168 H.V. dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Cho Voo Yeong Singaporean	Owner's Representative
<b>SPORTS TURF SOLUTIONS, INC.</b> G/F 8 Corboda Condominium, 138 Vekero St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Robert Vincent Moran American	President
<b>TAISEI PHILIPPINE CONSTRUCTION, INC.</b> 23/F Equitable Bank Twr. Pasao de Roxas, Salcedo Vill., Makati City	Yasuhisa Suzue Japanese	Executive Vice President
<b>AJAB LENDING INVESTOR CORPORATION</b> 33-B F. Manila St., Cubao, Quezon City	Balkaran Singh Indian	Company Collector
<b>AMOUR KTV BAR AND RESTAURANT</b> A03 & A04 HK Sun Plaza Home Depot and Lifestyle, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City	Ji-Hyung Cho Korean	Operation Manager
<b>GURTI LENDING INVESTOR &amp; TRADING CO.</b> 44-A Constanza St., Sampaloc, Manila	Bahwinder Kaur Sidhu Indian	Purchaser & Sales Marketing
<b>ROSE LENDING INVESTOR CORPORATION</b> 10 Vancouver Immaculate Concepcion, Quezon City	Manjit Singh Indian	Company Collector
<b>BALJAHAR LENDING INVESTOR CORPORATION</b> 59-K 2nd St., Kamuning, Quezon City	Shamsher Singh Indian	Company Collector
<b>WENSHA SPA CENTER COMPANY, INC.</b> Rm. 312 Pasda Mansion, 77 Panay Ave., QC	Fengbin Zhang Chinese	Consultant
<b>WENSHA SPA CENTER COMPANY, INC.</b> Rm. 312 Pasda Mansion, 77 Panay Ave., QC	Fengying Zhang Chinese	Coordinator
<b>WENSHA SPA CENTER COMPANY, INC.</b> Rm. 312 Pasda Mansion, 77 Panay Ave., QC	Ruimin Xu Chinese	Coordinator
<b>WENSHA SPA CENTER COMPANY, INC.</b> Rm. 312 Pasda Mansion, 77 Panay Ave., QC	Qiyin Yin Chinese	Supervisor
<b>EPOCHINA MINING CORP.</b> 7 Molave St., South Forbes Park, Makati City	Zhongzhu Zhang Chinese	Engineer
<b>EPOCHINA MINING CORP.</b> 7 Molave St., South Forbes Park, Makati City	Yangui Lin Chinese	Engineer
<b>GOLDCOAST MARINE (EXPORT) INC.</b> Unit 1 Mandy Commodities, 422 Numania St., Binondo, Manila	Jianxin He Chinese	Supervisor
<b>IBM DAKSH BUSINESS PROCESS SERVICES PHILIPPINES INCORPORATED</b> 30/F PBCor Tower, 6795 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Arun Koshal Indian	Assistant Manager, HR
<b>KOPINO CHILDREN ASSOCIATION, INC.</b> 174 Tambo St., Brgy. Pasong Tamo, Luzon Ave., Quezon City	Jong In Song Korean	Office Administrator

If you have any information/objection to the above mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director

AGATHA ANN L. DAQUIGAN  
OIC, Regional Director

(POI - November 1, 2007)



Republic of the Philippines  
Department of Agriculture  
**Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources**  
PCA Compound, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City  
Tel. No. 9285977/9285847 • Telefax no. 9285974

### INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Department of Agriculture/Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (DA-BFAR) invites eligible Boat Builders/Manufacturers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following project:

**Construction and Delivery of Ten (10) Units 28 ft BFAR Patrol Boats made of Fiberglass Reinforced Plastic (FRP) hull for the implementation of fisheries law enforcement project and other related activities.**

Approved Budget for the Contract ..... P12,875,000.00

Interested Parties can obtain the eligibility requirements at the BFAR-BAC Secretariat Office, Property Section at the Ground Floor of the PCA Compound, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City on November 5 to November 9, 2007

Deadline for submission of three (3) sets of the Eligibility Requirements will be on November 14, 2007

Bidding documents will be made available on November 21-27, 2007 upon presentation of Notice of Eligibility and upon payment of non-refundable fee of P10,000.00.

Pre-bid Conference will be on December 06, 2007 at 2:00 p.m. at the BFAR Conference Room, 3/F PCA Bldg., Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City.

The Bidders are required to submit three (3) sets (one original) of the technical and financial proposals sealed in two (2) separate envelopes and shall drop the same in the bid box at the BFAR Conference Room not later than 1:45 p.m. on December 17, 2007 and shall be opened at 2:00 p.m. on the same date by the BFAR-BAC in the presence or absence of the participating Bidder.

For local bidders, only shipbuilders/contractors duly licensed and accredited by MARINA are qualified to participate while for foreign shipbuilders, they must have local counterpart engaged in the construction of fiberglass patrol boats/vessels in the Philippines and should also be licensed/accredited by MARINA. Shipbuilder with proven design similar to BFAR specifications are given preference.

Failure to comply with the requirement shall be the immediate ground for disqualification.

Additional information may be furnished upon request. Please address all communications to the BFAR-BAC Chairman, Atty. Benjamin F.S. Tablos, Jr., Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, 3rd Flr., PCA Bldg., Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City or call the BAC Secretariat at telephone no. 428-3189.

DA/BFAR reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any informality therein, accept the bid and award the contract to the winning bidder with the most advantageous offer. The DA/BFAR assumes no responsibility to compensate and indemnify the bidder for any expenses or loss that may be incurred for the preparation of bids nor does not guarantee that an award be made.

(Sgd.) MALCOLM I. SARMIENTO, JR.  
Director

(POI - Nov. 1, 2007)



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE  
**BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE**  
Office of the Regional Director  
Revenue Region No. 5  
Tuguegarao City

### NOTICE OF SALE

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 216 of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997, as amended, the undersigned will sell at public auction in one whole lot, for cash, to the highest bidder at the Office of the Regional Director, 3rd Floor, ATI Building, Don Domingo, Tuguegarao City on the 26th day of November, 2007 beginning at 10:00 in the morning of said day, the following acquired/forfeited real properties of Bureau of Internal Revenue in the name of the Republic of the Philippines, described as:

#### DESCRIPTION OF REAL PROPERTIES

- Administrative Building erected on the lot of Isabela Electric Cooperative covering an area of 425 sq.m. under Tax Declaration No. 99-01-033-01269 located at Victoria, Alicia, Isabela with a Market Value of P 1,224,000.00.
- General Manager's Quarters erected on the lot of Isabela Electric Cooperative covering an area of 225 sq.m. under TCT No. T-214453, located at Victoria, Alicia, Isabela under Tax Declaration No. 99-01-033-0267 with a Market Value of P 492,000.00.
- Multi-Purpose Building erected on the lot of Isabela Electric Cooperative under TCT No. 214453 covering an area of 460 sq.m. under Tax Declaration No. 99-01-033-01290 located at Victoria, Alicia, Isabela with a Market Value of P 1,298,000.00.
- Warehouse erected on the lot of Isabela Electric Cooperative under TCT No. T-214453 covering an area of 370 sq.m. under Tax Declaration No. 99-01-033-01299 located at Victoria, Alicia, Isabela with a Market Value of P 355,800.00.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality therein, and accept such bids as may be considered most advantageous to the government, or call a bidding prior to acceptance of the bids and call for a new bid under amended rules. The decision of the Awards and Bids Committee (ABC) of the Bureau of Internal Revenue is final and binding. Done in the City of Tuguegarao, Province of Cagayan, Philippines, this 18th day of October, 2007.

Floor Price: P3,307,300.00

COMMISSIONER OF INTERNAL REVENUE

By: (Sgd.) ROMEO P. BUAN  
HEAD, REGIONAL OFFICE TASK FORCE  
OIC Regional Director

(POI - October 25 & November 1, 2007)

**BUY • SELL • PAWN**  
**ROLEX**  
SWISS SWATCHES  
JEWELRY  
DIAMONDS  
BEST PRICE  
SPOT CASH  
8547572  
8529198

**07 URVAN**  
10 HOURS  
P1,800  
WITH DRIVER  
7878776/7964377  
09213497170

**DCB TRADING INCORPORATED**  
based in Subic Bay is in urgent need of high caliber individual to join our team.

We are looking for one (1)

### Operation Manager

Criteria: • Graduate of any course  
3 years or up of related foreign operation work experience on automobiles  
fluent in Nihongo, Sri Lankan and English  
Excellent communication skills

Interested applicants may directly apply and/or submit their applications/resume to the address indicated below.

**DCB TRADING INCORPORATED**  
Human Resources Department  
Lot 2 EMS Area, 14th Gate, Pademelar Rd., Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Zambales  
Telefax No. (047) 252-8040

## CLASSIFIEDS

The Widest Reaching Classifieds

### More Classifieds

National Food Authority - Cabanatuan page B4  
National Food Authority - La Union page B4  
Bicol Medical Center page B4

## ADVISORY

In commemoration of All Saint's and All Soul's Day, our branch offices will be closed on **November 1, 2007**. Megamall branch is open on **November 2**. All other branches will resume business, **November 3, Saturday**.

Republic of the Philippines  
**CEBU PORT AUTHORITY**  
CIP Complex, Sergio Osmeña Boulevard,  
North Reclamation Area, Cebu City

E-mail: cpa@cpa.mazcom.com  
Telephone: 232-1481 to 63 • 231-8858 to 67  
Fax No.: 231-6848

### AN INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY/APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Cebu Port Authority, North Reclamation Area, Cebu City, invites accredited and duly registered contractors to participate in the public bidding of the following projects:

**NAME OF PROJECT: DREDGING OF HARD ROCK MATERIALS AND INSTALLATION OF LIGHTED MARKERS @ HAGNAYA CHANNEL**

- A. Scope of Work**  
a) Dredging and Disposal of Hard Rock Materials (22,000 cu.m.)  
b) Provision of Powered Float Markers

- B. Classification** Medium A for Ports and Harbor

#### C. Equipment Requirements

- |   |              |
|---|--------------|
| 1 unit Self Propelled, Shallow draft, Dredging Vessel | Owned/Leased |
| 550 cu.m. Capacity equipped with Dredt                | Owned/Leased |
| Mounted crane 85' cap.                                | Owned/Leased |
| 1 unit Orange post type solid retriever 4 cu.m. cap.  | Owned/Leased |
| 1 unit Clamps 4 cu.m. cap.                            | Owned/Leased |
| 1 unit GPS instrument                                 | Owned/Leased |
| 1 unit Tug Boat 820 hp                                | Owned/Leased |
| 1 unit Crane Barge with Crew                          | Owned/Leased |

- D. Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)** P36,267,805.93

**Source of Funding** CPA Corporate Fund

**Cost of Pre-qualification or Eligibility Statement** P 1,000.00

**Issuance of Pre-qualification or Eligibility Statement** November 5-9, 2007

**Deadline for Submission of duly accomplished** November 15, 2007

**Pre-qualification or Eligibility Statement**

Prospective bidders shall submit to the BAC Chairman of this office their duly accomplished Pre-qualification or Eligibility Statements in **HARD/BOOK-BOUND** form. Pre-qualification or Eligibility Statements submitted other than **HARD/BOOK-BOUND** form shall not be accepted.

Bid securities in the form of surety bond, Callable on Demand, can be secured from the GSIS or other private insurance & surety companies duly accredited by the office of the Insurance Commission.

Prospective bidders shall submit the necessary documents or evidence to prove ownership of equipment and the duly notarized lease contract indicating the brand, serial number, capacity and present location of equipment being leased.

Prospective bidders are required to present the original copy of Contractor's License/Certificate of Renewal and IAC Classification and Registration for verification/authentication before Pre-qualification or Eligibility Statement shall be issued.

All particulars relative to pre-qualification, bidding, evaluation of bids, and awards of contracts shall be governed by the provisions of R.A. 8154, and other rules and regulations as may be applicable.

CPA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality/defect therein, and to accept such bid as may be deemed most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) MARIO G. TAN

BAC Chairman

Noted by

(Sgd.) ANGELO C. VERDAN

General Manager

(POI - November 1, 2007)



Republic of the Philippines  
Department of Finance  
**Securities and Exchange Commission**  
SEC Bldg., EDSA, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City

### OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL

IN THE MATTER OF LIQUIDATION OF  
FINASIA REALTY AND DEVELOPMENT  
CORPORATION

SEC Case No. 055

FINASIA REALTY AND DEVELOPMENT  
CORPORATION,

Petitioner

X - - - - - X

### ORDER

Before this Office is the Liquidator's Report with Proposed Liquidation Plan dated 28 August 2007 submitted by the Liquidator of petitioner Finasia Realty and Development Corporation, Atty. Arlene T. Gonzales.

All creditors of record of petitioner are hereby directed to submit their comment or opposition to the proposed Liquidation Plan not later than fifteen (15) days before the date of hearing thereon, which is set on 28 November 2007 at two o'clock in the afternoon at the Office of the General Counsel ("OGC"), 9th Floor, SEC Building, EDSA, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City. The Liquidation Plan is available for examination and copying at the OGC during office hours.

SO ORDERED.

Mandaluyong City, 14 September 2007

(Sgd.) VERNETTE G. UMALI-PAGO  
General Counsel

(POI - November 1, 2007)

## OBITUARIES

*In Loving Memory  
on the 4th Death Anniversary of*

**MARIA DE LEON DIMAYA**

who joined her Creator on November 1, 2003.

Her family requests relatives, friends and the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul and to remember her always in their prayers.

Holy Masses will be offered in her memory at the following churches:

<b>Carmelite Monastery</b> Laag City	October 31, 6:30 AM November 1, 6:30 AM
<b>St. Joseph Church</b> Laag City	November 1, 7:30 AM
<b>St. William's Cathedral</b> Laag City	November 1, 6:00 AM
<b>St. John The Baptist Catholic Church</b> Badoc, Ilocos Norte	November 1, 6:00 AM November 1, 8:00 AM
<b>Laurdes Church</b> Quezon City	October 31, 6:30 AM November 1, 6:30 AM
<b>Santisimo Rosario Parish</b> Sampaloc, Manila	October 31, 7:00 PM
<b>Immaculate Conception Parish</b> 7211 West Talcott Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60621	October 31, 9:00 AM November 2, 6:30 AM November 3, 6:30 AM November 4, 6:30 AM November 1, 8:30 AM
<b>St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church</b> Scott Road, Burbank, California	November 1, 6:30 AM
<b>St. Finbar Church</b> Olive Ave., Burbank, California	November 1, 8:45 AM
<b>Guardian Angel Cathedral</b> Las Vegas, Nevada	November 1, 6:30 AM
<b>Sto. Domingo Church</b> Quezon City	

## OBITUARIES

### DEATH NOTICE

#### ROGELIO AGONCILLO ESTRECHO

December 25, 1942 - October 29, 2007

Died in the Grace of Our Lord at the age of 64.

His body lies in state at Ambassador Memorial Chapels, (2nd Flr., Chapel A), 257 A. Mabini St., Caloocan City

Cremation will be on Saturday, November 03, 2007 after the 9:00 AM Mass at San Roque Church, Caloocan.

### ELMO DE GRACIA BAUTISTA

will be interred on Saturday, 3 November 2007 at the Pasig Catholic Cemetery.

The funeral mass will be held at 1:00 P.M. at the Holy Family Parish Church, West Drive Street, Bo. Kapitolyo, Pasig City.

In Loving Memory  
1st Anniversary  
of our Beloved Father

### ATTY. FELIX MEER DELA CUEVA

Born: January 14, 1927

Died: November 1, 2006

Masses will be offered at

St. John The Evangelist Parish Church... 6:00 a.m.

Tanawan City, Batangas

St. Thomas Batangas Parish Church... 6:00 a.m.

Mt. Carmel, Lipo City, Batangas... 4:00 p.m.

### OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:

- Copy of Death Certificate
- Any identification document (I.D.)

### JOSE ILIGAN INOTURAN

April 25, 1914 - October 28, 2007

Date of interment: November 4, 2007, Sunday instead of November 5, 2007

Time of interment: 10:00 a.m.

Place of interment: Joycia Memorial Park, Marikina



# People, Events & Products

## Young entrepreneurs with a heart

THERE ARE MANY YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS with a variety of causes but rarely has a business been created specifically with charity in mind. Fete is an events styling company formed by two individuals who decided that the best way to help the world is to use their talents for the greater good.

Heading this unique events company are Czarina Ledesma and Ferdi Salvador, each armed with different tools to take what they call "event architecture" to the next level. A graduate of the Hotel and Restaurant Institution Management Program at the College of St. Benilde with training at Amanpulo as a guest assistant, Ledesma states that it was while living at Amanpulo where she understood for the first time what personalized service was all about. Salvador, on the other hand, has lived and traveled all over the world with an insatiable

desire to make all things beautiful, something that has been put to good use as his stint as a personal shopper for Rustan's. With such diverse backgrounds united by the same goal, Fete is ready to make a difference in the event planning landscape as the first group whose net proceeds go 100 percent to charity, something that many others cannot claim.

The benefactor for all of Fete's events go to a cause that both Ferdi and Czarina are truly passionate about: The Parenting Foundation. A non-government organization dedicated to fostering children, the Parenting Foundation provides foster care for abandoned and surrendered children awaiting adoption. During this critical period it has been proven that family care is superior to orphanages in every aspect. Even before the formation of Fete, the Ledesma

family led by Czarina, has opened their home to eleven foster children. Now with Fete, Czarina and Ferdi will be able to contribute more to this cause than before.

The Fete Team holds events in many distinctive venues all over the Metro. To aid the cause further, Czarina sometimes opens her home to friends and family at 32 McKinley Rd., Forbes Park, free of charge, because she believes that there is no sacrifice too great if it would benefit all the foster children helped by the Parenting Foundation.

Fete, which literally means festival in French, is being realized by these two young entrepreneurs living out their passion. They continue to organize a festival of extraordinary events that will benefit the world at large. Fete can be contacted at [feteeventarchitects@yahoo.com](mailto:feteeventarchitects@yahoo.com)



### SUBIC TURNS OVER VENUES TO 20TH AD CONGRESS

The Subic Bay Exhibition and Convention Center was recently turned over to the 20th Philippine Advertising Congress (PAC) in rites led by key PAC and Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) officials. The event included a ceremonial turnover of the symbolic key to Subic to 20th PAC over-all chair Yoly Villanueva-Ong by SBMA officials led by Administrator Armand C. Amaza.

It also featured production numbers by the Mondrian Aura College Dance Troupe with Subic's area contingents. Around 5,000 delegates are expected to troop to the Ad Congress, which takes place from Nov. 21 to 24. For more inquiries, log on to <http://www.20thad-congress-theneworder.com> or call the 20th PAC Secretariat at 894-3076, 894-0638, or 812-5622.



### ALASKA MILK UNVEILS NEW PACKAGING

Officials of Alaska Milk Corp. and Robinsons Supermarket, as partners, came out in full force in support of the unveiling of the new packaging design for Alaska Powdered Filled Milk at the newly renovated Robinsons Galleria Supermarket last August. Diamond Star and brand endorser of Alaska Powdered Filled Milk, Maricel Soriano, together with the general manager of Robinsons Supermarket Jody Gadin, and senior vice president and group general manager of Robinsons retail group Robina Gokongwei-Pe, did the honors of unveiling the giant replica of

the new Alaska Powdered Filled Milk. Ms. Soriano also toured the new Robinsons Galleria Supermarket, chatting with shoppers about the new look of Alaska Powdered Milk. Fans of Soriano and mail-goers were, likewise, treated to autograph-signing and picture-taking with the star. Shown during the unveiling are (from left) senior vice-president and group general manager of Robinsons retail group Robina Gokongwei-Pe, Mark Tansongkum, Bim Sebastian, Roco Cahilig, Ruby Alex, and Ronnie Ong with the Alaska family, Maricel Soriano, Blen Fernando

### Great food just a click away!

BROWSE YOUR WAY TO great cooking! San Miguel Pure Foods Culinary Center gives all moms wannabe cooks, food lovers and enthusiasts a delightful peek at mouth-watering dishes, the latest food news, easy tips and recipes as it introduces its re-designed website [mygreatfood.com](http://mygreatfood.com). Now bearing a fresh, colorful look, [mygreatfood.com](http://mygreatfood.com) also offers My Great Food Club members exclusive access to a wide variety of features: articles, polls, blogs, products, recipes and more recipes. As to aid great cooking not just for their homes but for entertaining friends and families or hosting special gatherings. To join, simply log on to [www.mygreatfood.com](http://www.mygreatfood.com)



### CSJL Grand Alumni Homecoming

COLEGIO DE SAN JUAN DE LETRAN WILL BE holding its 90th Grand Alumni Homecoming on Nov. 24 at 6 p.m., at the Letran College Gymnasium. This year's event, dubbed as "The Knight to Remember" is being organized and hosted by this year's silver jubiliarians, known as Dugong Arriba 1978 and 1982. The date of the Grand Alumni Homecoming also coincides with the feast day of St. Vicente Liem de la Paz, its beloved alumnus. Dugong Arriba 1978 and 1982 is inviting all graduates and alumni of Colegio de San Juan de Letran to attend this year's homecoming celebrations. For inquiries, please call the Letran Alumni Association office at 527-1777 or Erwin John N. Torres at 807-6323 or 0917-9857778. E-mail address is [dugongarriba7882@yahoo.com](mailto:dugongarriba7882@yahoo.com)

### China Bank promo winner

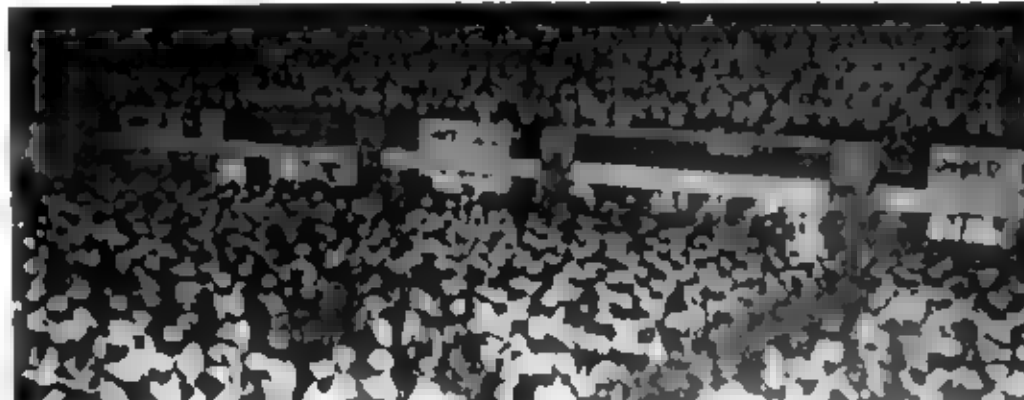
RI, TAN, LONG-TIME VALUED CLIENT OF CHINA Bank Quapo branch, won the top prize of P2 million tax-free, at the grand raffle draw last Oct. 15, of China Bank's "8.7M at 87" Anniversary Raffle Promo. Tan said "My wife and I were shocked when we learned that we won. This is a wonderful surprise. Thank you so much, China Bank!" China Bank's anniversary raffle promo ran from March 1 to Sept. 30. Prior to the grand draw, three bi-monthly draws were conducted and three lucky depositors won P1 million each - Suzette A. Agustin, client of Bacolod North Drive Branch; Elvira Luym, of SM City Cebu; and husband and wife Brenda and Modesto Realgo Jr. of SM Southmall. Aside from the P1M preliminary draw winners, a total of 106 other China Bank clients from across the country won P10,000 and P100,000 tax-free. For the complete list of winners, see print ads or log on to [www.chinabank.ph](http://www.chinabank.ph).

### Power Reader promo

LOCKER IN PARTNERSHIP WITH POWER-books, brings you the Locker Power Reader Volume I, which is sure to empower Locker aficionados and book lovers alike by giving them the chance to satisfy two cravings. You can now enjoy your favorite Locker and have your favorite book for a discounted price. You can avail a P100 discount for every minimum book purchase of P350 at any Powerbooks branch - that's almost 30 percent off on your book. Just look for the Locker sticker in every 250g, 220g and 200g Locker bag and present it at any Powerbooks branch to get P100 discount on all regular-priced books. One Locker pack is equivalent to one book purchase so the more you buy the more discounts you can get. Promo period is from Sept. 15 to Nov. 30. For over 80 years, the name Locker has been associated with the production of delicious, crispy, wholesome wafer biscuits and chocolate specialties. Locker products are available at all leading supermarkets nationwide.

### PLAI activities

THE PHILIPPINE LIBRARIANS ASSOCIATION (PLAI) announces the following incoming activities: 1. Colloquium on the state of the arts of selected libraries on Nov. 5, at the National Library from 8 to 11 a.m.; the general assembly and election of new set of officers of PLAI-NCR will be held from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.; 2. National Congress on "Developing Competencies: Challenges and Issues" on Nov. 12-14 at the College of St. Benilde. Angelo King International Center, Arellano Avenue, cor Estrada St., Manila, Manila followed by the general assembly on Nov. 14 from 1 to 5 p.m. For further information call Mario Chavez at 735-6011 loc. 6135, Fa Abelardo 525-0926; Mariou Estillore at 525-9401 and Susana L. Gonzales at 742-5612



### BRIGHT SMILES, BRIGHT FUTURE

School kids gear up inside the Eusebio Gymnasium at the Pasig Elementary School for the recently declared "7 o'clock Toothbrushing Habit" which is part of Gogate and DepEd's intensified campaign for better oral health among Filipino students. The declaration is also in line with the recent proclama-

tion of the Super Mega Brushing Activity as Guinness World Record Holder for the most number of people toothbrushing simultaneously in multiple locations, a project initiated by Anger "Bong" David professional relations manager of Gogate-Palmolive Philippines in partnership with DepEd



### BLSS AT WORLD AQUATIC BABY CONGRESS

Bert Lozada Swim School (BLSS) joined the thousands of infant aquatic specialists at the World Aquatic Baby Congress held at Wellington, New Zealand. In photo are BLSS managing director Angelo Lozada, Australian Council for the Teaching of Swimming and Water Safety (Austswim) chair Kirk Marks and Pepper Lozada, BLSS infant/toddler director. The event aims to raise the bar in infants and toddlers swim programs. BLSS is known for its "My Baby and Me" swim program. Interested parties can call 562-8041/563-5532 or email [info@bertlozadaswimschool.com](mailto:info@bertlozadaswimschool.com) or log on to [www.bertlozadaswimschool.com](http://www.bertlozadaswimschool.com)



### MANILA DRAGONS IN SUBIC DRAGONBOAT RACE

The Manila Dragons Dragonboat Rowing team saw action in the recently concluded Subic International Dragonboat Championship held at the Boardwalk, Subic Bay Freepoint Zone. The MD Men's Team clocked its best time in the 500-me-

ter final event and bagged the 3rd runner-up trophy. Team manager Greg Doronila, team captain Macky Macawile and coach Roando Isidro led the group with the support of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority and Sunset Iced Tea.



### DMC Fashion Pattern Kits: From thread-y to trendy

DMC, MAKERS OF SUPERIOR QUALITY embroidery threads and crochet cottons have launched 3 new design kits for craft and fashion lovers. The X-stitch Fashion Pattern Kits come in cute bags with 3 different designs and personality to suit your fashion needs: the Moon and Stars kit, Stars and Shoes kit and the Flower Girl kit. Each kit allows you to experiment and create your own unique designs for your clothes, bags, shoes and other fashion accessories. Moon and Stars kit is perfect for stitching on edges of pants, cowls, shoes and pockets. If you want to personalize your shirts and bags, the Stars and Shoes kit is ideal for you while the Flower Girl kit is great for pants, shirts, polo and bags too. All these kits contain metallic and embroidery threads, needle, waste canvas, patterns and easy to follow instructions.



tions for old and first-time stitchers. Waste canvas is used to help you make your designs, which you can remove after leaving only the design on your material. The kits were designed allowing stitchers to experiment and create their own fashion statements. This is a new fashion activity for teens and their friends or for fashion lovers who want to create their own individual style. The kits are now available in all DMC stores nationwide or you may call Focus Global, Inc. at 634-5587 for inquiries. Open your Kit and a surprise bonus awaits you.

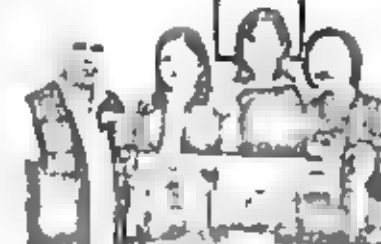
### ROTARY CLUB MPT PRESIDENT INDUCTED

Cynthia Espiritu (center) was inducted as the 2007 president of the Rotary Club Pasong Tamo Makati (RCMPT), District 1830. The 11th induction ceremony was held last Aug. 16 at Brassiere 21, Security Bank Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati City. Governor and Mrs. Renato 'Ator' Magad'a were the guests of honor of the said event.



### LIONS CLUB RECEIVES DONATION FROM PCSO

Lions Club International, District 301 Region I accepted 10 boxes of assorted medicines from the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO). Shown are (from left), Lion Rolando 'Roly' Paa, executive assistant to the Region I chair, Rosario Uriarte, general manager (PCSO) Teresita Gonzales, director (PCSO) and PP Ligaya 'Joy' Ferran, Region I chair.



### PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

Carat Philippines is pleased to announce the appointment of two senior executives namely, Jacob Vander Linden (left) and Marissa Barredo (right). Jake moved to Manila from New York in mid August this year, shortly after his wedding to the former Maggie Moon, to take up the post of senior vice president and head, communications planning for P&G. Prior to his move, Jake served at Carat USA for over six years, three of which were spent as VP, connection planner, running the baby care and coffee brands of P&G, thus bringing with him a solid P&G experience especially in the area of communications planning. He also has an extensive media experience of 10+ years at MediaCom and Grey West (both in the USA), making Jake well suited to take our P&G remit to the next level, equipped Carat Philippines president, Jocelyn F. Domingo. Heading up the post of media director, Carat Philippines is newly-appointed Marissa Barredo. Marissa, as she is known in the industry, has clocked in over 15 years' experience in media and account management with some of the big industry players in the Philippines. Before joining Carat, Marissa held the respective positions of media buying director at Zenith Optimedia for all Nestle buying requirements, and media director for buying for 4 years at Universal McCann handling the Globe Telecom buying remit.



Vander Linden Barredo



### INK FOR LESS MOUNTS GREEN CRUSADE

INK for Less, the country's leading ink refilling business, recently embarked on a tree-planting campaign as part of its renewed environmental advocacy thrust. Starting off on a grassroots level, Ink for Less carried out the initial phase of its campaign in various schools in neighboring urban communities - working closely with school officials and students as they encouraged environmental awareness and educated them about the crucial role of trees in the biosphere. The tree-planting campaign kicked off last Sept. 12

at the Brian Elementary School where 300 seedlings were planted by Ink for Less officials and representatives. Aside from the seedlings, Ink for Less also donated P20,000 worth of IFL gift certificates for the school's printing needs. Photo shows (from left): Amable 'Miguel' C. Aguiluz IX, Ink for Less president/CEO; Christine K. Aguiluz, Ink for Less EVP for finance; Mirasol Itebebe, Brian Elementary School Principal; Vicky San Juan-Co, PBSP Membership unit manager and the other PBSP representatives.



# Peripheral arterial disease may predict stroke

LEG CRAMPS ARE MOST COMMONLY relieved by a quick rest. Most people tend to ignore such symptoms and dismiss it as simply fatigue. What many do not know is that leg pain may be a sign of a more serious illness or can be a predictor of heart disease or stroke.

"As well as the disability created by PAD it can sometimes be an early warning of potential heart disease or stroke," said Dr. Simon Green from the Queensland University of Technology School of Human Movement Studies. "PAD occurs when fatty plaque builds up inside arteries, particularly above and behind the knees..." Dr. Green explained. "The first symptom is often an aching or cramping of calf muscles during walking, followed by relief when resting."

PAD is a result of atherosclerosis or blocked

arteries which hinder normal blood flow within the limbs. The "fatty plaque" inside the arteries is caused by high cholesterol levels which may affect the blood vessels in the brain and consequently trigger stroke.

To limit or prevent these fatty build-ups, it is important to prevent blood clots from forming. Dr. Thomas Kwiatkowski, chair of the Department of Emergency Medicine at Long Island Jewish Medical Center suggested the use of anti-platelet agents.

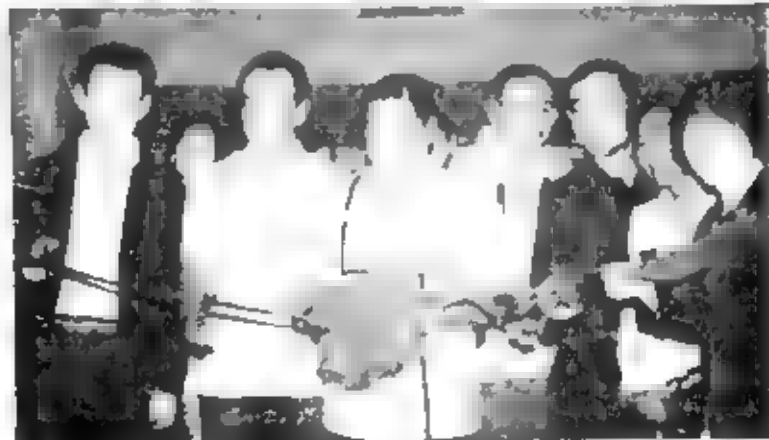
Anti-platelet or anti-blood clotting agents like clostazol are used in secondary stroke prevention treatment or PAD treatment because it reduces the risk of atherosclerosis or fatty plaques in the arteries.

In Japan, the Clostazol Stroke Prevention

Study (CSPS) was conducted to test clostazol's effectiveness in preventing stroke. More than 1,000 patients participated in this double-blind, placebo controlled trial, which showed a 41.7 percent risk-reduction of stroke recurrence in patients who took clostazol compared to placebo.

Experience with Clostazol (Plavix) as an anti-platelet is supported by evidence-based trials for more than 10 years. It is the innovator that provides trusted and proven efficacy and long-term safety compared to other generic equivalents.

For information on PAD and Stroke Issues and Prevention, call the customer hotline at 811-4723 for GMA/Metro Manila or 1-800-1888-4723 for provincial calls.



## PANASONIC FUSES ART AND INNOVATION

Panasonic recently concluded two artistic ventures that put forward Filipino photographic excellence at the helm of innovative progress. The Art of Life by Panasonic saw hundreds of entries from amateur and professional photographers nationwide, while a photo exhibit entitled 'Living Passions' by Panasonic featured premier professional photographers in the country to depict the five elements of life. Shown in the photo are Mr. T. Iwamoto,

Panasonic executive director Jim Paredes, who portrayed the flaming passion of the Fire element, Rene Almada, Panasonic Philippines president, Wig Tysmans, who characterized the emotional and intuitive Water element; Hiroyuki Iwaki, sales and marketing director, George Tapan, who manifested new beginnings with the Wood element, and Mandy Navasero, who captured the deepest splendor of the Earth element.

## METROBANK, XOOM INK PARTNERSHIP

Metropolitan Bank & Trust Company (Metrobank) has forged a partnership with Xoom Corp., the fastest growing global Internet money transfer company, to enable overseas Filipinos to remit money to their beneficiaries Metrobank accounts using the internet. The agreement was signed by (from left) Metrobank executive vice president Carmelita Araneta,



Metrobank director Valentin Araneta, Xoom president and CEO John Runze, and Xoom regional vice president Asia Pacific region Gene Gutierrez.

## Ducks opens at Landmark-Trinoma

ONE OF THE LEADING CLOTHING line makers in the Philippines, Ducks Unlimited, has opened its 13th free-standing boutique in Manila. The new boutique is located at Landmark-Trinoma, Edsa in Quezon City. It carries the complete range of Ducks shirts, for men and women. As with the newly-opened SM-Center Point Ducks Shops, the bright and minimalist interiors is complemented with genial efficient customer service. Above all, the two new Ducks Boutiques boasts of not only shirts, but underwears, big sizes shirts, knitted blouses for ladies, and socks. Ducks Unlimited shops are also available in SM-San Lazaro, SM-Marikina, SM-Pampanga, Shoppesville-Greenbelt, Century Park Sheraton Hotel, Al-Mall, Glorietta 3, Filinvest Mall, Robinson's Galleria, Robinson's Ermita, Robinson's Pioneer, Crossing Dept. Store, Landmark-Makati.



## Microsoft cites former exec

MICROSOFT PHILIPPINES regrets to announce the resignation of its enterprise marketing manager, Dittas A. Formoso, effective Sept. 16. Formoso was with Microsoft Philippines for seven years. In her last position, she was cited for several best practices in the worldwide enterprise marketing community. She is also considered one of the pillars of the IT industry for her 20-year contribution to the growth of the industry in the Philippines. As itap president, she established a 20-PC Microsoft-based lab for the mentally challenged wards of the Children Development Foundation Institute. She is currently a director of the Philippine Institute for the Deaf where students are taught to speak.



## Acer Phil's new channel manager

ACER (PHILIPPINES), Inc. announces the appointment of Anneleen F. Bernabe as its new channel sales manager. Anneleen, or "Annie", commands an extensive experience in the information technology (IT) industry. Prior to her appointment at Acer, Annie held various executive positions, which included building and growing of computer product lines and strengthening of the sales team in her previous posts. Annie is a double-degree holder (Bachelor of Science in Computer Science and Bachelor of Arts Major in Journalism) at the Manuel L. Quezon University in Quepos, Manila, and a consistent Top 10 student of her class. At Acer, Annie is expected to continue with her own brand of work ethic, career philosophy, and other outstanding qualities that Acer hopes would serve as an inspiration to her team and other employees of the company, that hopefully would translate to a stronger Acer brand.



## Lopez graduates 1st honors

KRISTINA CARLA R. Lopez graduated 1st honors in May 2007 at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, Newark, with a degree of Bachelor of Science, major in Finance. In the University's Scholarship and Awards Ceremony, she garnered the most awards that included the highest award, the Rutgers Business School Undergraduate Newark Dean's Award. This award is given by the dean of Rutgers Business School to the student judged by the faculty as having demonstrated the most outstanding overall excellence. Lopez has been conferred lifetime membership by the International Honor Society Beta Gamma Sigma in recognition of her outstanding achievement in business programs accredited by the Association of Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). Membership to this prestigious society is by invitation and extended only to top students of accredited business programs by AACSB International. Also an outstanding athlete, Lopez received the All-New Jersey Athletic Award for Women's Tennis after having been named in the 1st singles and 1st doubles for the period September 2005 to May 2006. The proud parents of Kristina are Restituto and Ma. Victoria Lopez.



## Super Bowl of China: Committed to high quality of food preparation

SUPER BOWL OF CHINA, ONE OF THE Philippines' favorite destinations for Chinese casual dining, adheres to strict sanitation procedures in the preparation and handling of its products.

It is pursuing an extensive employee training program. Management consistently underscores, not only during training sessions, but also in day-to-day operations, the importance of good personal hygiene, proper storage and handling of food, waste management and the two-step process of cleaning and sanitizing. The staff, especially food handlers, are required to wear clean and appropriate uniforms, avoid unsanitary habits and actions, maintain good health, and periodically practice proper hand washing procedures.

Super Bowl uses fresh ingredients procured only from reputable suppliers. "We buy from the industry's most trusted providers who regularly inspect their goods and abide by established and government-mandated health regulations," says Rachel Pallarone, operations director. Trained personnel carefully inspect deliveries for proper labeling, temperature, appearance and other factors important to food safety. They also check for broken boxes, leaky packages or dented cans and signs of re-freezing, pre-wetness and pest infestation.

Storage areas are kept dirt free at all times. The temperature is regulated and goods are kept in clean, undamaged wrappers, packages and containers. Items are labeled with the delivery date and use-by date to make sure that they are consumed at the right time.

Relating to waste disposal, the restaurant reduces the amount of solid waste by doing away with unnecessary packaging. Garbage is kept far away from the food preparation area and garbage bins are leak-proof, waterproof and pest-proof.

Super Bowl of China currently has outlets located at Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati, Jupiter Street, Makati, Festival Mall, Alabang, SM San Lazaro, SM City North Edsa, SM Megamall Megastrip, Blue Wave, Marikina, Roxas Boulevard corner UN Avenue, Gateway Mall, Araneta Center, Blue Wave Macapaga Avenue, Pasay City, SM Mall of Asia, Pasay City, SM San Fernando Pampanga and at Trinoma Mall, North Edsa. The affiliated Big Buddha Restaurant is located at the 2nd level of Greenbelt 3 in Ayala Center Makati City.

Delivery services are available, using mechanically sealed, ready to heat, hygienic and microwaveable plastic containers. Call 737-8888 to enjoy your favorite dishes in the comfort of your home or office.

## YSTILO SALON OPENS IN CAGAYAN DE ORO

Cagayan de Oro will now have a feel of that great salon experience as Ystilo Sa on opens at the First Level East Promenade, Lim Ket Ka Mall. Cagayanons will enjoy a wide variety of trendsetting hairstyles performed by top-notch hairstylists as well as first-class salon services only at Ystilo Sa on. In photo is Vina Morales with franchisees Angelina Lim and Awn Lim during the inauguration of the Cagayan de Oro outlet last Sept. 10.



## A WEEKEND OF AWARDS FOR DM9 JAYMESYFU

DM9 Jayme Syfu garnered three awards in the recently concluded 29th Catholic Mass Media Award where outstanding mass media works were honored last Oct. 25 in the Marie Eugenie Theater of the Assumption. The young agency was awarded Best Public Service-Print for their Pro-Life Philippines 'Mother's Day' and Best Branded Television commercials for Smart 'Father' and 'Son'. Their finalists included Smart 'Wrong Sand' (Best Public Service TV), Smart 'Abubakar' (Best Branded Print), Pro-Life 'First Time' (Best Public Service Radio). DM9 president Susan Dimacali, chief creative officer Merlee Jayme and strategic planning director Diday Alcudia accepted the awards for the agency. On the same weekend, DM9 Jayme Syfu won its first medal in the Asia Outdoor Advertising Award in Singapore. Eugene Demata, the agency's executive creative director accepted



ed the Bronze Trophy from the head of the prestigious competition JWT Singapore's Tan Guay Hin, for the agency's poster campaign for Tower Record (IPOD White). The awards night was held in Suntec Singapore, a world-class venue located in the heart of Asia's most integrated meetings, conventions and exhibitions hub. DM9 had three finalists in the competition: Single poster 'Coppertone Carlo' and two poster campaigns: 'Coppertone Shadow' and 'Tower Records IPOD'. Only two agencies from Manila, BBDO Guerrero Ortega and DM9 Jayme Syfu won medals from the AQA.

## GJC OFFICERS VISIT GJC GLORIETTA

Gloria Jean's Coffees recently had the pleasure of the visit of Gloria Jean's Coffees international executive chair Nabi Saleh and regional general manager Troy Franklin at its Glorietta outlet. Shown with the GJC management staff, from left standing: business development director Ramon P. Baingit, franchising and business development officer Ruel S. Hernandez, Mr. Franklin, COO Romme M. Turbanos, operations director Rafael Lito J. Rego, seated: R&D/QA assistant manager



Adel B. Revula, Mr. Saleh, marketing manager Len L. Santos. Gloria Jean's Coffees is an international specialty coffee chain and is present in 26 countries worldwide.



## GRANDPARENT'S DANCE SPORTS WINNERS

Larry Iguldez and Rose Marie Jacob, Alexander Silva and Teng Abella, Cesar Monzon and Elena Lee, and Giovanni Turmambing and Susan Pablo were the overwhelming winners for Grade C Standard division at the recently concluded Dancesports Com-

petition for Grandparents held at Festival Supermall in Filicity, Alabang, Muntinlupa City. With them (extreme right) are Cynthia Esteban of Festival Supermall and Nanette Mendoza from the Dancesports Association of the Philippines.

## Product FILES

### Work hard, play hard, drink right

TODAY'S GROWING NUMBER OF YUPPIES ARE LEADING THE most stressful type of lifestyle in society. Long workdays are filled with deadlines, paperwork, and meetings, not to mention stress from daily commute, heavy traffic, and other responsibilities at home and in the community. Oftentimes, health is overlooked or compromised due to lack of sleep, proper nutrition, or adequate rest and relaxation. Thus, these days, keeping fit is no longer seen as vanity—it's a necessity. While high-intensity sports and activities are very popular, many enthusiasts are still not fully aware of habits and practices that can keep them in optimum physical shape. Fluid replenishment is one such aspect that is not fully understood by active individuals today. The ideal remedy to quench thirst or replace lost body fluids is by consuming an isotonic liquid—a solution that possesses the same concentration of sodium or salt as the normal cells of the body, thereby eliminating thirst but still maintaining electrolyte balance. One such beverage fit for today's active lifestyle is 100 Plus, an isotonic sports drink specially formulated to relieve body thirst better and faster so that dynamic individuals can stay active longer.



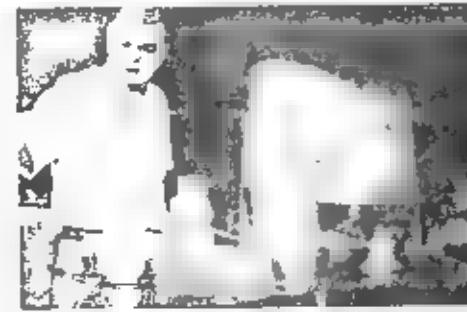
### Want the perfect steak?

GRILLING THE PERFECT STEAK REQUIRES TWO IMPORTANT elements: good meat and a hot grill. It's not just about cooking the steak fast and taking it off the grill—the minute it's done. Cooking steak is actually a bit of an art form. If you just want to enjoy your steak without going through all the fuss, head on down to Chili's where cooking steaks is treated like an art form. Chili's will grill your steak exactly the way you want it. And Chili's hefty US Ribeye Steak has Chili's own special seasonings and topped with garlic butter. Plus, it's served with side dishes that spill out of your plate: fresh veggies, loaded mashed potatoes and garlic toast. So for perfection in steaks and desserts, head on over to Chili's at Greenbelt 1 in Makati, Northeast Greenhills and Tomas Morato in Quezon City.



### Honey what's the buzz?

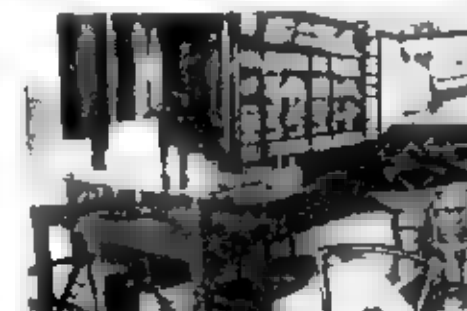
FOR OVER SEVEN YEARS, TEPOE COMMERCIAL, the appointed distributor of Sioux Honey Association, USA, has been distributing Sue Bee and Aunt Sue products to the local market. This brand of honey is made of the best nectar sources for honey-making—from clover, orange blossom, and other flowers, producing the best possible taste and nutrition. Sue Bee Honey is natural, pure, and a source of tremendous energy. As natural as it gets, Sue Bee Honey has been gathered and packed in extremely sterile conditions so it retains all the vitamins and minerals. Sue Bee is full of easily absorbed vitamins, betacarotene, minerals, enzymes, proteins, and 19 amino acids. It is an excellent natural sweetener for juice, coffee, tea,



and dishes. Recently, Teope Commercial established a tie-up with one of the country's leading culinary schools, CCA. Together, they made an unforgettable night that not only showed gratitude to the people who supported Sue Bee for many years but to also enlighten those who are interested to know what the buzz is all about.

### Max Brenner now at Trinoma

MAX BRENNER OPENS ITS NEWEST BRANCH at the Trinoma Mall. Expect its loyal customers—families and corporate professionals alike—to flock there and indulge in all of Max Brenner Chocolate Bar's gastronomic fare and of course, its chocolate concoctions that helped establish the Max Brenner brand as the finest name in chocolate confectionery delight. Max Brenner's Chocolate Bar reinvented the way people love chocolates, particularly their warm chocolate fondues with a wide array of dipping choices like chunks of seasonal fruits, lady fingers, marshmallows, and cheddar cheese, with crunchy ground peanut, coconut chips and pinipig that



have established a cult following among chocoholics. Max Brenner Chocolate Bar is located at the Cinema Level of Trinoma Mall, Mandalao corner North Avenue, Quezon City.



# BUSINESS

## Business transaction costs in RP lowered, says NCC

Restrictions on exit, entry of investors minimized

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE NATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS Council said transaction costs in the country were significantly reduced after a year-long campaign to improve factors that affect investor's perceptions.

According to NCC director Ruy Moreno, achievements were observed in making easier the entry and exit of foreign businessmen, lowering costs for exporters, and simplification of business registration process.

Created last year to address perceptions that the country's attractiveness to investors was waning relative to neighboring countries, the NCC has formed six groups to formulate action agendas and push initiatives.

These groups are focused on human resources, management expertise in specific public offices, financing to micro, small and medium enterprises, reduction of transaction cost and improvement of transaction flows, the upgrade of infrastructure, particularly in transportation, and the reduction

of costs and securing supply of electricity.

In a statement, Moreno said the restriction on the entry and exit of foreign investors in the country had been minimized with the operation of an alien certification of registration and identity card valid for five years.

He said the ACRI reduced the processing time of such type of visa upon arrival from 15 days to three days, provided that the applicants were endorsed by a foreign chamber of commerce. The fee for the visa was also cut from \$70 to \$25.

Also, Moreno said Malacañang had ordered a reduction in the scanning fee for 10-footer container vans from \$25 to \$5 to lower costs and improve the flow of goods.

"The wharfage fee was likewise reduced by the Philippine Ports Authority up to December 2007 upon the recommendation of the NCC," the NCC director said.

Moreno said the Bureau of Customs' single window pilot project was implemented starting with the Department of Agriculture, and was expected to be adopted by all

other agencies that deal with exporters.

The business registration process in key cities like Manila, Ormoc, Muntinlupa, Parañaque, Quezon City and Marikina was simplified with support from International Finance Corp.

As for power costs, Moreno said the NCC worked with National Power Corp. which agreed to reduce the power costs of economic zone locators by P1 per kilowatt hour.

"By December, even factories outside Peza (Philippine Economic Zone Authority) areas may also avail themselves of this rate reduction," he said.

In terms of infrastructure, Moreno said the NCC had proposed that airline firms fund the lighting of five feeder airports in Zamboanga, Tagbilaran, Caticlan, Kalibo and Lumbia.

On the education agenda, the NCC has pushed efforts to train teachers that would be responsible in raising to 70 percent students' and teachers' proficiency rate in English, Math and Science by 2010.

## Money supply grows at slower pace

By Doris C. Dumiao

THE COUNTRY'S BROAD money supply grew at a much slower pace of 11.4 percent year-on-year in September from 14.9 percent in August, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said yesterday.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said demand for money had softened even on a month-on-month basis, as seasonally adjusted broad money supply or domestic liquidity eased by 0.2 percent from the 1.7-percent decline in July.

Domestic liquidity or m3 is an indication of the total money supply within an economy, including money in circulation, demand deposits, money market funds and short-term repurchase agreements.

The central bank aims to keep domestic liquidity growth below 20 percent.

"The BSP will continue to monitor monetary developments to ensure that the level of domestic liquidity is supportive of sustainable economic expansion while being consistent with the objective of price stability," Tetangco said.

Net foreign assets accumulated by financial institutions continued to drive domestic liquidity up, although at a slower pace of 32.2 percent year-on-year from 39.7 percent in August.

Net domestic assets shrunk for the second straight month by 5.1 percent following the BSP's mopping up operations using high-yielding special deposit accounts (SDAs) since May.

These special deposit facilities were previously not attractive to banks because they were not backed by collateral unlike the central bank's primary monetary tool—the overnight borrowings.

## Chinese, Russian firms keen on gas pipeline project in RP

By Abigail L. Ho

PETROCHINA CO. LTD. OF China and Russia's Gazprom have expressed interest in undertaking the 80-100 kilometer Batangas-Manila (BatMan 1) natural gas pipeline project.

PNOC Exploration Corp. president Rafael del Pilar said these companies had already seen earlier studies on the

pipeline project and that they had conducted their own preliminary studies.

"PetroChina and Gazprom went to us and looked at the studies (on the pipeline project). They were scouting for projects. PetroChina has more advanced studies and they're offering four definitive proposals," he told reporters.

A critical factor in attracting

more prospective investors in the project, he said, was the determination of whether or not additional gas could be produced from the Malampaya Deep Water Gas-to-Power project in offshore Palawan.

"The pipeline will be useless if there will be no gas to sell. But the pipeline can still be used if there will be other gas discoveries that can be devel-

oped," he said.

Apart from PetroChina and Gazprom, he said Thailand's PTT Public Co. Ltd., through local arm PTT Philippines Corp., had also expressed interest in BatMan 1 as well as in the 140-kilometer Batangas-Manila (BatMan 2) project.

PNOC-EC parent Philippine National Oil Co. had even signed a memorandum of un-

derstanding with PTT for the conduct of a feasibility study on the projects, he said.

He was quick to add, however, that the MOU did not prevent PNOC-EC from entering into partnerships with other investors for the actual implementation of the projects.

PNOC had assigned PNOC-EC to implement both projects.

In an earlier interview, PTT

Philippines president and chief executive Siripong Phoungpaka said the company was willing to sink between \$500 million and \$700 million into the construction of the two pipelines.

Apart from the pipelines, he said PTT Philippines was also looking at putting up a power plant and a natural gas vehicle facility along the BatMan 1 and BatMan 2.

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IN THIS ISSUE  
■ Chocolate and  
chili, anyone? /C4

# LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

sms feedback: inquire life name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 386 (Smart) or email us at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

TUESDAY FITNESS • WEDNESDAY 2BU • THURSDAY FOOD • FRIDAY FASHION &

COUNTRY COOKING  
Micky Fenix

## An education in farming

**H**AVING BEEN BORN AND BRED IN the city, I have not experienced having our daily meals come from our backyard or a nearby stream.

But vacations in my parents' hometowns taught me that the pork, chicken, fruits and vegetables did not always come from the market. And the bangus was from my grandmother's fishponds.

So, while it was amusing to hear an American visitor declare that she never knew shrimps had heads, I understood why she said it.

When you buy your food from an American supermarket, then shrimps have no heads. The farm or fishpond experience is missing.

That brings me to my recent farm exposure. Three of us were brought by the United States Department of Agriculture to Iowa under the sponsorship of the Cochran Program for International Agricultural Understanding.

It was my first visit to the Midwest, the geographical description of states in the north central part of the United States.

### Farm country

Before then I only knew three things about Iowa. It is farm country. It is where the two major US political parties hold their first major electoral event, the Iowa caucus. It is where my best friend from high school, Mary Bennett, took her college course, skipping freshman year because her Philippine education was too advanced, she said.

Our base was the Iowa State University, a beautiful sprawling, quiet university in Ames. Our main host was Madeline Schultz of the Extension Value Added Agricultural Program office.

While many of our talks with experts were done in the vicinity of the university, such as lectures and demonstrations on health and wellness, we were brought to the fields for the more practical side of the program.

We arrived in Des Moines, the capital, at night so we did not get to see any view save for the many stars because farm lands were unlit and the state's air quality was very good.



COCHRAN Fellows Micky Fenix, Myrna Segismundo and Virgith Buena with USDA rep Ramona Singian (third from left) at the Iowa State University campus

### Activists want changes in US agricultural production because of health and wellness issues

Ames is about 40 minutes from Des Moines. It was in the morning of the next day that we saw the vast expanse of corn and soy fields as far as the eye could see. The only things that broke the monotony were the picturesque barns that reminded me of drawings in my Grade 1 "See John and Jane" book.

Most of Iowa's corn and soy are used to feed livestock. The grains are brought to co-operatives.

We visited West Central, one of the 20 largest grain companies in the United States. Everything is computerized, from determining how much grain is brought in to where it is stored and, once it has been dried enough, to unloading to train cars for

transporting to processing areas.

Determined to find out if there was, indeed, a food versus fuel issue in Iowa, I asked West Central's manager Ron Soender about it. He clarified that since most of the grains were for feed, these could be processed first to extract ethanol, a biofuel, then the ethanol by-products were fed to livestock such as at the Summit Farms, a 1,000-head beef feed lot we visited.

But we learned much more than just what was fed to livestock at the Wenzel Swine Farm. A pixie-sized sprightly Brenda Wenzel brought us to her piggery, which she managed with one employee.

### One-person operation

The thought of having to do everything by herself—feeding, artificially inseminating sows with semen collected from a few resident boars, castrating male piglets—was enough to exhaust us. She even had time to cook lunch for us, giving us our first taste of Iowa pork chop, as thick as two inches but so tender and taken with the best baked potato with cheese siding.

AN EDUCATION / C3



BRENDA Wenzel with two of her piglets

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## Difficulty Level ★☆☆



## THE CONSUMER

## Keep those ATMs filled during the holiday

By Linda B. Bolido

ARE THE BANKS MAKING SURE THEIR automated teller machines have enough cash for the long holiday?

Will they be able to replenish the machines if cash runs out? Will there be somebody on the end of their hotlines if people call for help, like when their ATM cards are captured by the machines?

Given complaints in the past, it seems necessary to remind banks that, for many people, not being able to access their accounts during a long break is a major crisis.

More and more people are relying on the ATM to provide them cash when and where they need it, especially during the holidays when offices are closed.

Many ATM cardholders do not have any other source of cash and are completely reliant on these cash dispensers during holidays.

## Not so hot

We ask about hotlines because of a recent complaint we got from PR practitioner Mila Alora.

About three or four years ago, she tried to withdraw cash from the ATM of Bank of Philippine Islands (BPI) in Cash & Carry using her Banco de Oro (BDO) card.

She did not get her cash but the receipt showed the amount she tried to withdraw had been debited to her account. When she contacted the banks to complain, she was told it would take at least three working days before the error could be corrected.

Recently, she had exactly the same problem. She tried to withdraw cash from the BPI ATM at Cash & Carry using her BDO card.

Again, the receipt reflected the transaction was completed but she did not get her money.

She tried calling up the BPI hotline but, despite following the instruction diligently, she was not able to talk to anybody because "all phone bankers were busy."

She was told to leave a message but, when she tried doing that, she was told all voice boxes were full (I am not sure if it would have helped if she did manage to leave a message. I tried doing that a long time ago and until now I am still waiting for my call to be returned).

She finally decided to go to the nearest BDO branch. If she thought things had improved since three years ago, she was disappointed.

She was told once again it would take three to 10 days before her account could be updated to reflect the amount that she did not get.

Her ordeal did not end there but, to cut a long story short, she raised one important point. What if she was counting on that money to buy food and other basic necessities? Did that mean she and her family would have to wait until the records had been corrected before she could have access to that money?

Alora is beginning to think she might be better off keeping her account in thrift banks where service is still personal rather than in financial giants like BPI and BDO.

## Congressional interest

Problems like Alora's appear to be generating some interest among legislators.

Partly-list Rep. Teodoro Casiño of Bayan Muna was reported to have filed House Resolution 51 asking the House of Representatives, through its Committee on Banks and Financial Intermediaries, to look into what he considered bank irregularities.

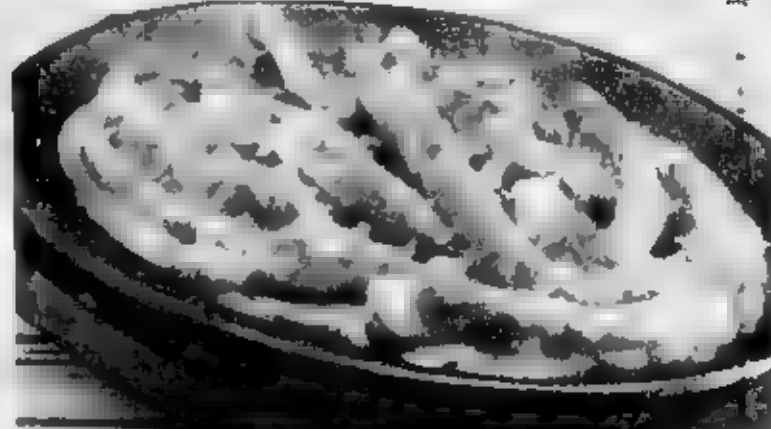
Published reports quoted Casiño as saying in the resolution, "Cases of irregularities in ATM transactions are regularly reported in the media, including cases where withdrawals are debited from an account even if no cash is dispensed by an ATM. In such cases, it takes at least three days for banks to correct the mistake, giving the aggrieved parties unnecessary hassle and anxiety."

He said some 18 million ATM cardholders made over a million transactions every day through over 5,750 ATMs in 74 banks and institutions nationwide.

Send letters to The Consumer, Lifestyle Section, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Mascardo and Yague Sts., Makati City; or e-mail lbolido@inquirer.com.ph



**SAFARI RAFFLE.** Makati Shangri-La's Circles Event Café, where diners enjoy the eclectic choice of international dishes offered in five different theater kitchens, stirs up the holidays with a Nissan Patrol Super Safari Raffle until Dec. 31. A group of at least five for lunch or dinner buffet gets a raffle stub for a chance to win the top-of-the-line luxury sports utility vehicle. Call 8400884 or 8138888.



**SIZZLING DELIGHT.** Spiced, diced and spiced, the Sizzling Squid at Eastwood City Dencio's branch is a must-try. Fresh squid is prepared *a la pobre* or with garlic sprinkled all over. The aroma is enough to whet the appetite. Dencio's is at Eastwood Citywalk 1. Call 9116951 or text 0917-8EW CITY.

## An education in farming

From page C1

We had a birthday cake for Brenda's husband, Kurt, and for the dietician with us, Virgith Buena, baked by the indefatigable Madeline and decorated appropriately with icing pigs.

Brenda's Swine Farm brought home the fact that farming in the United States was highly specialized. Hers is known as a farrowing farm because she breeds and then sells the piglets. Patterning the piglets into full-size is done elsewhere.

It is much the same with beef. Summit Farms grow the livestock only up to a certain weight. In the

grain industry, farmers just grow corn and soy but do not process them into feeds.

The grain from Iowa is processed elsewhere but can return to Brenda's farm as feed for the pigs. The pork she served us that day might have come from her own farm.

Is there a way to find out? This is what the university's Center for Agricultural and Rural Development is looking into. According to Professor Heien H. Hensen and Director Jancinto Fabiosa (a Filipino from Bicol), tracing can help in locating particular

farms when a problem occurs such as mad cow disease.

## Clamor for change

Health and wellness problems have moved several activists to clamor for a change from highly specialized to more self-sustaining farming. They say there is so much "food mileage" or energy expended to transport from farm to processing and then back.

To them, this will mean food for local consumption will be produced locally. They encourage restaurants to use more of the local produce and do

their menus according to the seasonal availability of ingredients.

Our group was always asked what it was like in the Philippines. That Iowa study tour made me want to know more about our own farming practices. Are we moving away from the self-sustaining farming of my grandparents' and parents' generations into the supposedly more efficient specialized farming witnessed in Iowa?

E-mail the author at pinoy-food04@yahoo.com

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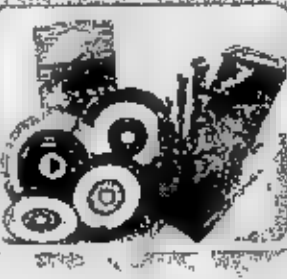
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# Chocolate to set you on fire

From Queensland comes Seaton candy bars, a curious blend of cocoa and chili, just in time for holiday gift-giving

WILD  
CHILLI  
CHOCOLATE

KITCHEN RESCUE  
Reggie Aspiras

**H**OW APPROPRIATE that it was during Manny Pacquiao's most recent boxing bout that I first had a taste of Wild Chilli Chocolate! Like Pacquiao's punches, this knocked me off my feet! It was my chocoholic's baptism of fire!

Seaton Fire Chocolates, now the craze from Australia to New York, from Japan to London, are a rather curious concoction.

Though the coming together of chocolate and chili is nothing new—the famous Mole of Mexico being the perfect example—having it together in a bar that's ready to eat is something for the adventurous.

The chocolates from

Queensland, Australia, come in either Mild or Wild.

According to an article written about Seaton Fire by Sydney's Daily Telegraph, Mild, which is made of milk chocolate, "registers four out of 10 for hotness, while Wild Dark, nine out of 10 in the Scoville scale" (The Scoville scale is the measure used to determine the "potency" of chilies.)

Looking for something unusual to give for the holidays? Well, Seaton Fire just cuts the mark!

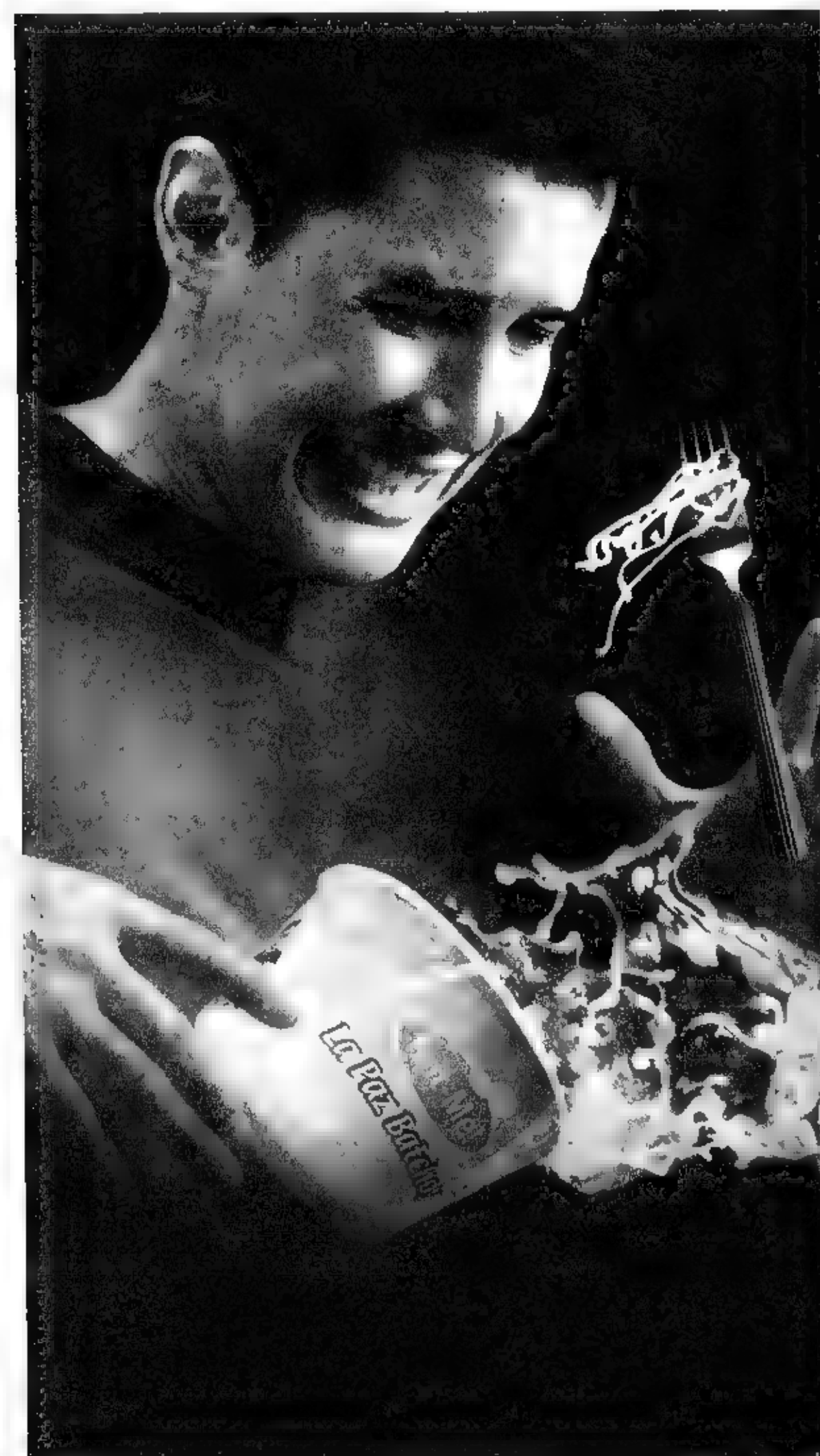
The chocolate, like Santa Claus, is coming to town! So, you better watch out! And once you try it, you better not cry!

Call Lito Morado at 8130525 or 8138266.

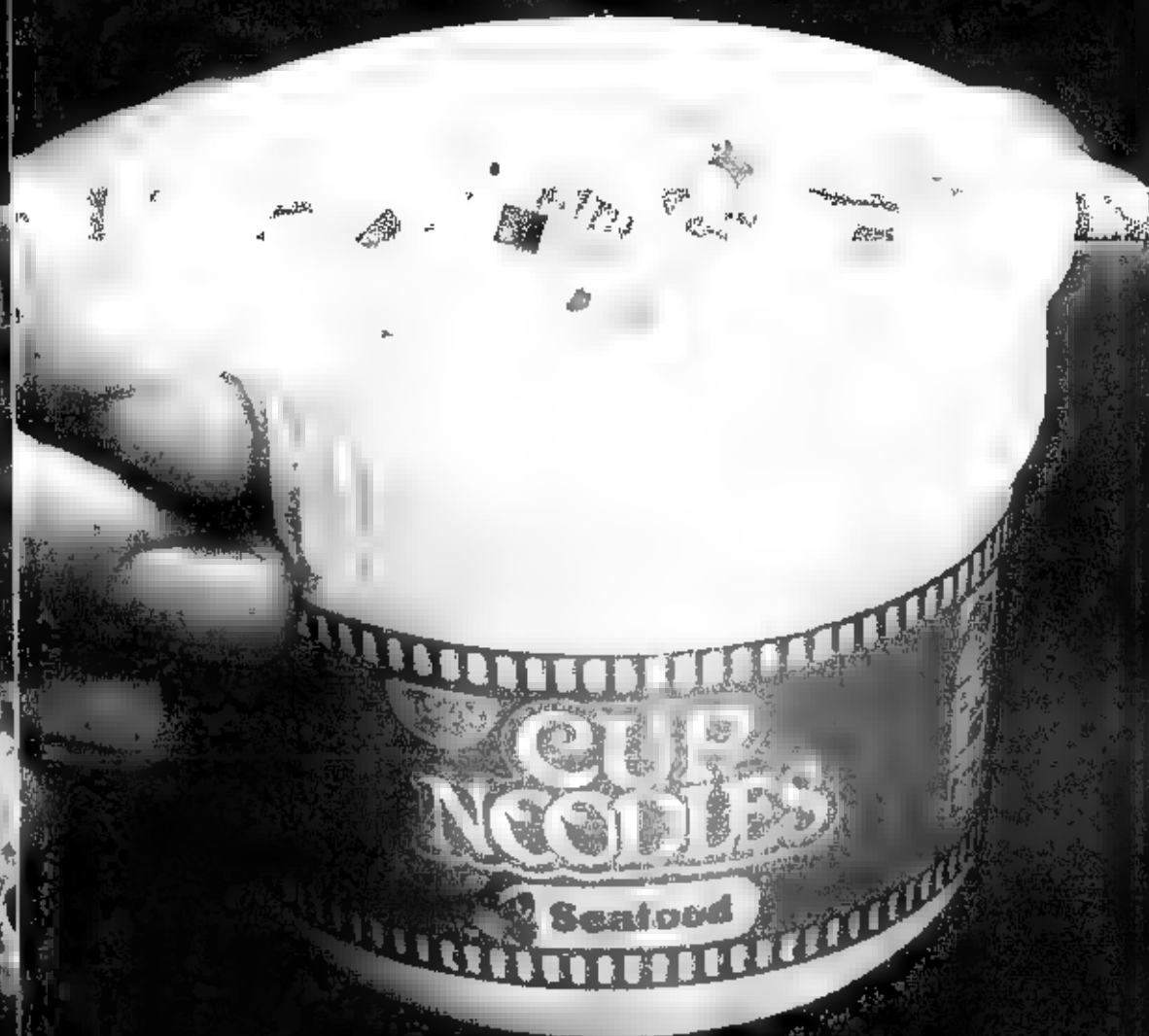
E-mail the author at [raspiras@inquirer.com.ph](mailto:raspiras@inquirer.com.ph)

## Reggie's Phone Book (last installment)

White Ware— Plates/Platters	DST—4140928/ Tess—0917- 5310693	Delicious marinated pigeon, ready to fry	Mely—8193862	Sugar, gum paste, cold porcelain flowers, wedding cakes—Mrs. Florendo	9132527
Best rum cake	8260552, 7275013	Myrna's delicious <i>adobo</i>	4111434	Home-service art lessons watercolor oil and acrylic—Ba lada	0916-6586898
Cheap videographer/ Photographer	0920-7388702	Rare vegetables— chard, kohlrabi, spaghetti squash	8867779	Kwong Bee special pork	2414808
Yema and giant <i>ensaimada</i>	8965523	Chef's uniforms— Humphrey	0927-5126912 0917-8906865 0917-5347064 —Lex	"Maca"—style sausage	6712498
Vegetables mush- rooms, herbs—Lolita	9128137	Christmas bread— Jon-jon	0915-9045771	Danish rolls	0918-9422268
My favorite chocolate- chip cookie	Zeny—9112101 8911784	Moon cake and roast duck—Mr. Lu	5252720	Fortune cookies	8565801
J's Cochinitillo <i>asado</i> , <i>paellas</i> , sandwiches	8108735	Restaurant equipment and gadgets/gourmet ingredients whole- sale—Wardenberg	8403771	Licor de Crema Catalana (Cream liqueur, a take- off from the famous dessert Crema Catalana)	0917-5217500
Decadent chocolate cake	Wendy—0917- 8106414	Restaurant equipment and gadgets. KLG	8332288; San Klan Heng—7332133, 7332129	Red Wine Vainformosa	
Frozen dimsum	0917-8400258	Bacchus—Le Creuset	6347303 6181809	Rioja Tinto Joven	
Pork barbecue	Rudy—0917- 84407160, Michele— 4218212 8996923	Cookware	7245812	Perfect cooker, rice in 5 minutes—Chris or Judy or 8311971	0917 8424140
L'Artisan—delicious sour dough, <i>ciabatta</i> , muffins	0920-9047459	Asian ingredients— Chef's Nook	6385725	Saint Mary Dairy—fresh	8232835
Phad Thai cooked on the spot	0917-8041101	Spanish ingredients— Terry's	09163552197	carabao's milk, low- fat yogurt drinks, low-fat cottage cheese	09172041952
Free-range chicken, eggs	0917-8557805	Taste of Italy— Pasta Machines	0917-8990306	<i>quesong puti</i> and low- fat <i>pastillas</i>	7242867
Key lime pie—Apples	0918-9094115	Beautiful Candles— all shapes and sizes	0917-5301213	Delicious <i>lechon</i> ,	Aung Loring
Food order—Susie	0918-8118088	Cassava—Castañeda	2924421/2924578,	Fruit cake I love to eat—	8966872
Lemon squares—Tippi	0920-9082969	Ovens, baking and food equipment—Gomeco	Ruey Shung— 4114232, 7279648, Besterm—8329231- 33, Wee-Done In- dustries. Mr. Willy Capule—539535, 2932090, Bak- arex—6374815- 16, Middle- by—5208170; Fabtech— 4133333	Costa Brava	
Upholstery/curtains— Gari	0917-8552729		7338221, 7337036.	<i>Maja pandan</i> , more like	8107533
Give-away designer (beautiful)—Via	0926-6917291			A Thai Takol—Rose	
Party food booths— corn dog, fries, etc.—Happy Team	0920-9568488			Dulce de Leche—Pixie	7232776
Cones—all kinds of ice- cream cones and waffle bowls	0905-2468133 3722965			Disposable plastic containers in every conceivable shape, size and form	3651869/ 4126987
Best belly dancer—Ivy				Teflon recoating— A. Tech International	8200757
Caramel Cake— Estrella's	0917-8550215			Desserts delivered to your door step —Diamond Hotel	5262211
Rent—Spanish chorizo (real imported Spanish spices used)	8544716			Made-to-order giant cookie cakes— Mrs. Field's	8441241
Chorizos, large— Axelia	0917-8213484, 9297790			Best <i>halo-halo</i> ,	0917-8963960,
Tempeh	0917-7047303			<i>palabok</i> , <i>mochi</i> , <i>gatas</i> <i>ng kalabaw</i> , <i>maja</i> — Fe Guardian of Corazons	045-8882527
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# ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Emmie G. Velarde

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## RP bet wants elusive crown

By Armin Adina

"ENOUGH WITH THE BASHING!"

Filipino-Scottish Margaret "Maggie" Wilson, the Philippine bet to the 57th Miss World pageant, made the appeal to her kababayans during her send-off party last week at the Araneta Coliseum Gazebo in Quezon City.

The 18-year-old actress and MTV VJ said she needs all the support she can get as she prepares to fly to Sanya, China tomorrow to compete in the prestigious beauty pageant.

### Unfavorable comments

Maggie was reacting to unfavorable comments hurled against her by pageant fanatics on numerous media, including the Internet.

Maggie, who was also adjudged Miss Photogenic in Binibining Pilipinas-World last March, has been enduring scathing comments about her supposedly imperfect looks.

"It's such a bad habit that we Filipinos have," Maggie said, referring to the insults.

Up to the last minute, Maggie had to dismiss rumors about her being stripped of her title after questions were raised on her eligibility to participate in the prestigious competition.

She reportedly failed to comply with a pageant requirement: That contestants should at least be a high school graduate during the competition. She was just about to graduate from high school when she was crowned Binibining Pilipinas-World.

"I only heard about it from my

friends who asked if what was said on the radio was true," she recalled. "I just came from the Araneta offices for my training and fitting. I told the Binibining Pilipinas Charities about it, so they released an official statement saying I'm still the girl."

Maggie chose to brush off rumors, concentrating on her preparations for the finals instead. She said she got valuable tips on how to win the judges' approval from Miss World finalists Mafae Yunon and Karla Bautista, her predecessor Anna Mans Igit and 1993 Miss World princess and second runner-up Ruffa Gutierrez.

Maggie will face competition from more than 100 delegates around the world. She finds Angolas Micaela Reis and the Dominican Republic's Ada Amee de la Cruz as among the most beautiful.

In Asia, she believes her strongest competitors are Malaysia's Deborah Priya Henry and India's Sarah-Jane Dias. "India always sends strong competitors," Maggie noted.

### Semifinal slot

But she believes her being multi-racial and well-traveled will give her an edge in the competition. She has also prepared for "fast-track" events where the winners automatically earn a semifinal slot.

"I'm doing the sports challenge because I'm athletic. I've been hitting the gym a lot—training," she revealed. "If I do the talent event, I'll sing a local song by artist Juhanne. Her songs are feel-good."

The 5'9 1/2" beauty also hopes there would still be SMS voting this year, as in the last five edi-



tions. "I'm not sure. There's still no feedback from the Miss World organization," she said.

But before she leaves for the Dec. 1 pageant, Maggie begged her fellow Pinoy to "pray for me."

"I need you to believe in me and what I can do," she said. "I'm going to give it my all!"

**BINIBINING Pilipinas-World**  
Margaret "Maggie" Wilson leaves for Sanya, China tomorrow with hopes of being the first Filipino to win the Miss World pageant.

JOAN BONDOC

### CHEER FACTOR

LONDON—Demand for rats as pets has surged, thanks to the latest Disney/Pixar animated film "Ratatouille" featuring the adventures of gourmet rat Remy. Britain's Pets at Home domestic pet chain says rat sales have surged 50 percent since the film opened in Britain on Oct. 12.

Reuters



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## Proposed bills to boost local films

By Michelle V. Remo

LEGISLATORS PROPOSED FILMS ARE SUBMITTED TO HAVE SOME CHANCES OF COMING OUT WITH FUTURE FINANCING IF LEGISLATORS SUCCESS IN PASSING THE BILLS THAT WOULD BOOST THE DOMESTIC FILM INDUSTRY.

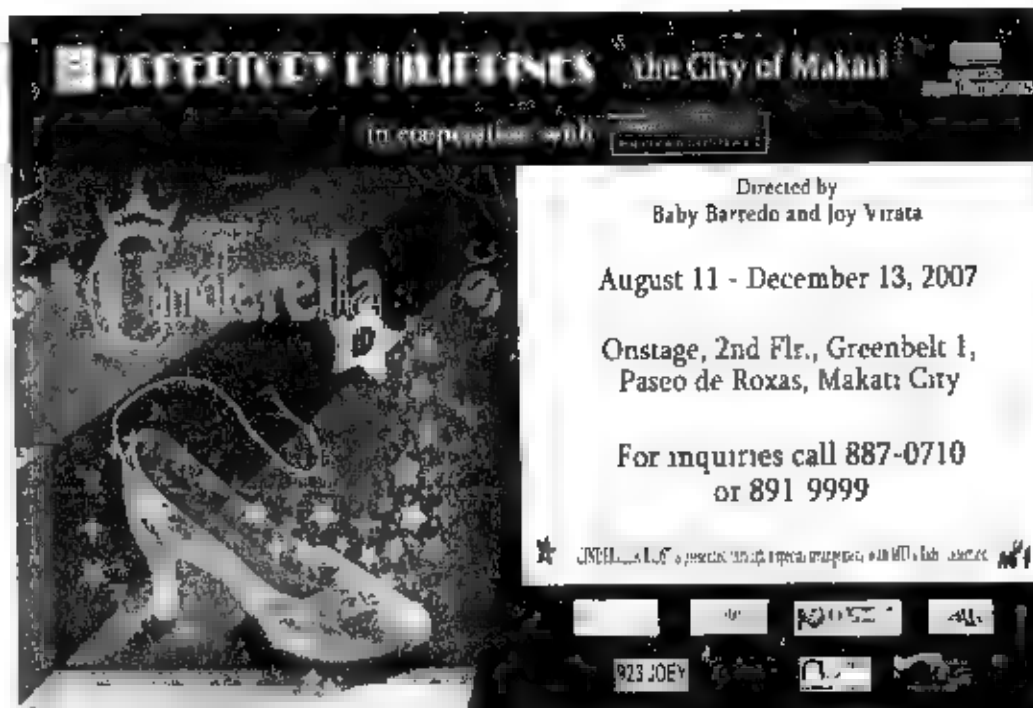
Senate Bill No. 4, authored by Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, proposes the imposition of a 5-percent gross income tax to replace all other national and local taxes currently paid by proprietors, lessees and operators of theaters and cinemas in relation to film showings.

Of this 5 percent gross income tax, 3 percent would go to the national government while the remaining 2 percent would be allotted to the concerned local government unit through its treasury department.

Senate Bill No. 71, filed by Sen. Loren Legarda, seeks to exempt locally produced films classified as "General Patronage" and "Parental Guidance 13" from the payment of the amusement tax.

The bill likewise exempts filmmakers from

PROPOSED: DJ



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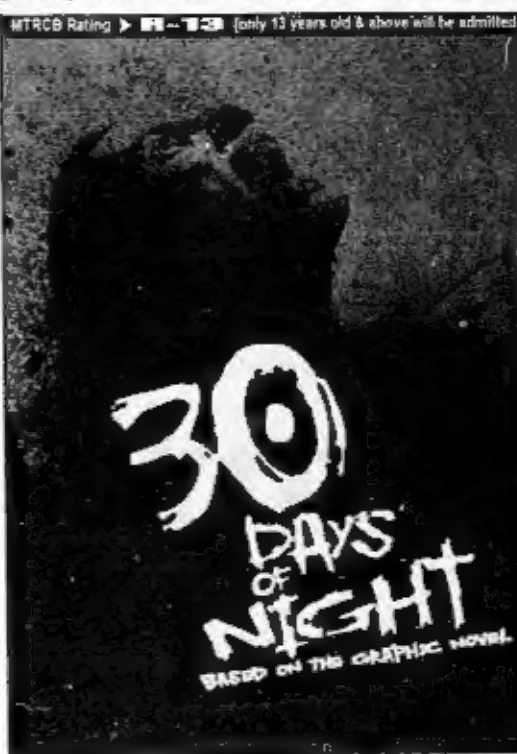
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8. KUNG FU FIGHTER

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4. HIDE AND SEEK

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FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA



# Proposed...

From page D1

the 12-percent value-added tax (VAT) on their importation of film production equipment.

In a position paper, the Department of Finance objected to the imposition of a 5-percent gross income tax on the film industry in lieu of all other taxes, saying this would contradict the Special Economic Zone Act of 1995, or Republic Act No. 7916.

RA 7916 states that the privilege of paying a one-time 5-per-

cent gross income tax in lieu of all other taxes is only given to firms operating in economic zones.

On the proposed exemption of GP and PG-13 films from the amusement tax, the DOF said this would hurt the revenue-generating capability of local governments.

The DOF also said exempting some filmmakers from the amusement tax will result in inequity in taxation.

## Spellbinding...

From page D4

cal flavor of the story. It would've been great if other non-human creatures that Vess lavishly drew in the book made appearances as well, but their absence didn't detract at all from the mystical scenery.

Because "Stardust" follows a certain structure, it arrives at

several anticipated story details in due time. But it doesn't bore.

Perhaps the only thing out of place is the corny love song by the reunited boy band Take That. It plays as the end credits roll, but you'd be too giddy about how the tale ended to really mind.

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### UNCUT VERSION LUST CAUTION

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By Oliver M. Pulumbarit  
Contributor

THE MAGICAL "STARDUST," ORIGINALLY an illustrated fantasy novel by author Neil Gaiman and painter Charles Vess, is simpli-

fied and cleaned-up for the big screen treatment—for good reason. It's a fairy tale about love, loss, liberty and legacy—but the film respectfully retains its core and expounds on its essence to attract a wider audience.

The trailer isn't spectacular or even attractive. But surprisingly, the two-hour feature sparkles with wit and wonder, making the jaunt to new realms truly worth it. Skepticism vanishes early into the story, as the assemblage of actors assuredly don their characters.

The meek Tristan (Charlie Cox) is a restless shop boy from Wall, an English town next to the other-dimensional hub of Market Town. The young man crosses the stone barrier separating the two spaces, unmindful of centuries-old laws, hoping to retrieve remnants of a falling star. He'll give what he finds as a present to the woman he's infatuated with, Victoria (Sienna Miller). But he didn't expect that the star had taken a human form (Claire Danes), and that she's being hunted by a number of pur-



MICHELLE Pfeiffer  
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suers, including a wicked witch-queen (Michelle Pfeiffer).

Tristan's and the star woman's journey takes them to perilous territories, where they encounter friends and foes alike. Long-lost relatives, schemers, and spell-casters fatefully meet, ultimately shaping the once-ridiculed mill-quetoast into a brave, sword-wielding champion. A well-situated

montage helpfully hastens that transition, too.

The film version has allowed for some story changes. Originally conceived as "a faerie tale for adults," the source material depicted mature situations, among other things. Some characters, such as the pirate captain (Robert de Niro), have been ex-

panded to serve the needs of the screen-play. And while the soft, flowing hues of illustrator Vess isn't replicated, the more reality-steeped colors and design elements are nonetheless helpful in bringing the tale to vivid life.

It also helps that special effects were used wisely. The few shots of the flying pirate vessel, as well as the witch's signature green flame and some morphing effects, are just enough to establish and reestablish the magi-

SPELLBINDING/D3

## REVIEW

**EXCLUSIVE**  
Now on its 2nd week at GLORIETTA 4 CINEMAS

From the director of "RUN LOLA RUN"  
Based on the best selling novel

### PERFUME

THE STORY OF A MURDERER

"GENIUS. I LOVE THE STORY."  
Roger Ebert, CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

"SENSUOUS."  
Lisa Schwarzbaum, ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R-18)

Constantin Film, DreamWorks Pictures, NOKIA

**Araneta Center**  
aranetacenter.net

**Gateway Mall**  
gatewaymall.com.ph

**Gateway Cineplex 10**  
gatewaycineplex10.com

**LARGEST CURVED SCREEN 70-FT WIDE, 30 FT HIGH**  
**EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE**

<b>30 DAYS OF NIGHT</b> 1:15/4:00/6:45/9:30	<b>HALLOWEEN</b> 2:40/5:00/7:20/9:40	<b>HIDE AND SEEK</b> 1:50/4:10/6:30/9:00
<b>UNREST</b> 2:45/5:00/7:15/9:30 <b>RESIDENT EVIL: EXTINCTION</b> 3:10/7:50	<b>BALLS OF FURY</b> 2:45/5:00/7:15/9:30	<b>APAT DAPAT DAPAT APAT</b> 5:30/9:50
<b>LUST CAUTION</b> 3:10/6:10/9:10	<b>THE SEEKER: DARK IS RISING</b> 4:20/9:20 <b>RENDITION</b> 1:50/6:50	<b>STARDUST</b> 12:55/3:35/6:15/9:00
<b>30 DAYS OF NIGHT</b> 12:45/3:25/6:10/9:00		

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www.aranetacoliseum.com

**2007 WORLD POOL CHAMPIONSHIP**  
Nov. 3 to 11, 2007

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For ticket inquiries, please call TicketNet at 911-5555 or log on to www.ticketnet.com.ph

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<b>GLORIETTA 1</b>	1 30 DAYS OF NIGHT	2 HALLOWEEN	3 BALLS OF FURY	4 HIDE & SEEK
<b>GLORIETTA 4</b>	1 DADDY DAY CAMP	2 BALLS OF FURY	3 30 DAYS OF NIGHT	4 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL
<b>GREENBELT 1</b>	1 HALLOWEEN	2 BALLS OF FURY		
<b>GREENBELT 3</b>	1 30 DAYS OF NIGHT	2 HALLOWEEN		
<b>ALABANG TOWN CENTER</b>	1 HALLOWEEN	2 30 DAYS OF NIGHT		
<b>AYALA CENTER CEBU</b>	1 HALLOWEEN	2 HIDE & SEEK	3 KUNG FU FIGHTER	4 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL
<b>MARKET! MARKET!</b>	1 HIDE & SEEK	2 30 DAYS OF NIGHT		
<b>TRINOMA</b>	1 HIDE & SEEK	2 THE UNREST	3 30 DAYS OF NIGHT	4 BALLS OF FURY
	5 PERFUME: THE STORY OF A MURDERER	6 RENDITION	7 HALLOWEEN	

**AT THE MALLS**

CONCIERGE HOTLINE NUMBERS:  
Glorietta - 752 7272  
Greenbelt - 757 4653 to 54  
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; 772 1860  
Ayala Center Cebu - (832) 231 5342 loc. 324  
Market! Market! - 686 7519  
Trinoma - 901 3800

**GLORIETTA**  
Halloween Treat: Dorothy and the Witches of Oz - A Trumpets Musical Theater Performance  
October 28; 6pm to 6pm; Glorietta Activity Center

**GREENBELT**  
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**glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN CENTER AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! Trinoma**

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A HUGE COMEDY WITH TINY BALLS

DAN FOGLER • CHRISTOPHER WALKEN  
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SPYGLASS ENTERTAINMENT

Distributed by Solar Entertainment Corporation



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## REVIEW



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SPELLBINDING/D3

**Araneta Center**  
Tatavalla Mall Farmers Plaza

**Gateway Cinema 10**  
LARGEST CURVED SCREEN 70 FT WIDE, 30 FT HIGH

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LUST CAUTION	THE SEEKER: DARK IS RISING RENDITION	STARDUST 2:55, 5:35, 8:15, 9:00
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<b>GLORIETTA 2</b>	4 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL	5 FRIGHTFEST	6 HALLOWEEN	7 RENDITION
<b>GREENBELT 3</b>	1 HALLOWEEN	2 BALLS OF FURY		
<b>GREENBELT 2</b>	1 30 DAYS OF NIGHT	2 HALLOWEEN		
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	3 BALLS OF FURY	4 STARDUST	5 RENDITION	
<b>AYALA CENTER CEBU</b>	1 HALLOWEEN	2 HIDE & SEEK	3 KUNG FU FIGHTER	4 BUTTERFLY ON A WHEEL
<b>MARKET! MARKET!</b>	1 HIDE & SEEK	2 30 DAYS OF NIGHT		
	3 THE 11TH HOUR	4 HALLOWEEN	5 BALLS OF FURY	
<b>TRI NOMA</b>	1 HIDE & SEEK	2 THE UNREST	3 30 DAYS OF NIGHT	4 BALLS OF FURY
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TriNoma - 901 3000

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